Malaysia, Libya agree to broker RP-MILF peace talks

Story on PAGE A2

HINDE NA P'WEDE ANG "I DID" SA KASAL

Bicol priests to ask brides: Are you ... ?

LEGAZPI CITY—"Are you pregnant?"

From now on in this Bicol diocese, "I am" or, "I am not" will carry more weight than "I do" as a bridal disclosure in helping the

BICOL/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

GMA order gives Bobi broad, sweeping powers

By Carlito Pablo

RIGOBERTO Tiglao, once the President's spokesperson, may have faded into the background.

But, if a new administrative order is any gauge, Tiglao's political star is at its brightest.

President Macapagal-Arroyo issued

GMA/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Tuesday, February 25, 2003 ★★ 44 pages / 4 sections / vol. 18 / no. 79 P15 website: www.inq7.net

GMA to Saddam: Go for 'win-win'

Gloria turns from hawk to dove on Iraq crisis

By TJ Burgonio

KUALA LUMPUR—From a hawk to a dove.

Speaking before a gathering of non-aligned countries, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday backed away from her unqualified support for the US policy on Iraq and instead called on Saddam Hussein to act like a statesman.

Ms Macapagal urged the Iraqi president to strike "a win-win settlement" with the United Nations in order to spare his people from the "agonies of a devastating war." She appealed to Saddam to step up cooperation with UN arms inspectors by showing them around suspected sites of weapons of mass destruction.

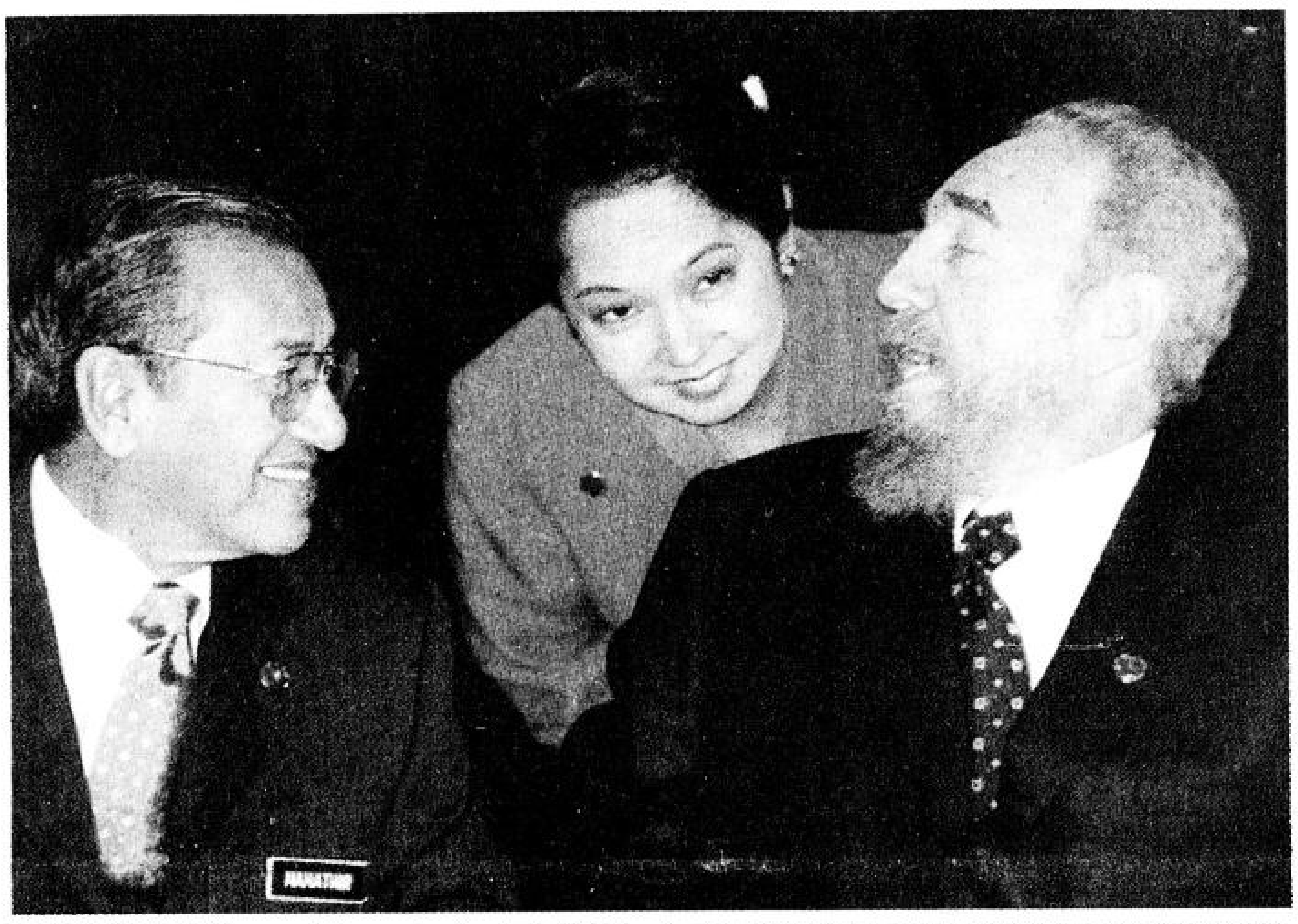
Iraq's transparency, Ms Macapagal said, would be recognized the world over as an "act of highest statesmanship" that would stave off war and save thousands of lives.

"I believe this will be recognized as a judicious act by the Iraqi people and by the non-aligned nations, and cheered by peoples of all faiths and persuasions," she said.

The President, speaking at the 13th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) here, also appealed to North Korea to return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to avoid another crisis.

A "great future" awaits both Iraq and

GMA/ A15



PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo stops to chat with Cuban President Fidel Castro and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad during a photo session at the start of the 13th Non-Aligned Movement summit in Kuala Lumpur on Monday. AFP

Mahathir calls for worldwide ban on war

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad yesterday urged presidents, ministers, kings and sheiks representing more than half the globe to strive for a worldwide ban on war, saying the US-led drive against terrorism and Iraq was a campaign to dominate non-white nations.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad welcomed national leaders to a two-day summit of the 116-nation Non-Aligned Movement, which wants its voice heard in the US confrontations with Iraq and North Korea—two member countries accused of having weapons of mass destruction.

The group wants Iraq to meet UN demands to disarm, but opposes any unilateral US invasion to force Baghdad to comply.

Mahathir, an influential Muslim statesman, warned that war was "the most important threat" facing the non-aligned bloc of mostly developing nations, which represents 55 percent of the world's population and holds nearly two-thirds of the UN General Assembly seats.

"War must be outlawed—that will have to be our struggle for now," Mahathir, the group's incoming chair, said at the summit's opening.

Following the Sept. 11 terror attacks, powerful countries were spearheading "a revival of the old European trait of wanting to dominate the world," which Mahathir

MAHATHIR/ A15

Iglesia mad at GMA for turning rally into 'circus'

EXPRESSING disappointment with Sunday's prayer rally for world peace at the Rizal Park in Manila, the Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) yesterday lashed out at President Macapagal-Arroyo for using the event to justify the impending United States invasion of Iraq.

"What was supposed to be an occasion of prayer turned out to be a political circus," said INC Executive Minister Eraño G. Manalo.

"The unwelcome participation of politicians and their uncalled for speeches made a parody of prayer," the INC head said in a statement.

Manalo noted that while most of the delegates from different sectors prayed for peace and eschewed war as the only option for the resolution of the US-Iraq conflict, President Macapagal-Arroyo "delivered her own political speech written in the guise of prayer expressing support for the US military action on Iraq."

In her "prayer," the President focused on President Saddam Hussein and his alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction.

Manalo said the President also justified a preventive strike by the US military on Iraq in case Saddam failed to fully cooperate with UN arms inspectors.

"The Iglesia ni Cristo expresses its disappointment on the politicizing of the Prayer for World Peace held at the Luneta Grandstand," he said.

"Upon the invitation of El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, the INC agreed to

IGLESIA/ A4

Sick mama sues for time for ailing son

By Raul C. Dancel

FLOR de Jasmin Valencia, 43, was diagnosed with cancer of the kidney three months ago. She has learned to accept her fate. What she is suing for now is time—maybe a few more years so she could continue looking after her 10-year-old son, Justine, who is suffering from Down Syndrome, and be with her husband, daughter and two other sons.

But time costs money. For dialysis (she needs to have her blood cleansed twice a week) and medication, Jasmin must spend at least P48,000 a month. And her debts are piling up. She is becoming desperate because she is having a hard time getting her hands on the small sum that her husband sends from Saudi Arabia.

The remittance of her husband Ricar-

SICK/ A4

Soldiers, cops in Mindanao placed on full alert

By Gerald G. Lacuarta and Martin Marfil

THE MILITARY and police in Mindanao were ordered to raise their alert status yesterday, after Muslim leaders warned that the deployment of US troops in Sulu may lead to an outbreak of violence.

Even as Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Dionisio Santiago said he wasn't taking the warning lightly, opposition to the deployment hardened in both chambers of Congress.

Sen. Ralph Recto said sending American soldiers to Sulu was no different from allowing Japanese troops to go on patrol in Bataan.

"Those who can't fathom why the people of Sulu are opposing US troops should ask the people of Bataan how they would feel if Japanese soldiers will be permitted to run after bandits hiding in Mount Samat," Recto said.

Police Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay told Camp Crame reporters that he had ordered police forces in Mindanao to raise their alert level.

In Camp Aguinaldo, AFP public information chief Lt. Col. Michael Manquiquis said that the military has gone on red alert in Mindanao, amid intelligence

SOLDIERS/ A15

Justice still eludes victims of Marcos abuse after 17 years

By Christine O. Avendaño

TRINING Herrera and Bonifacio Ilagan were tortured during the Marcos dictatorship, but the government has yet to acknowledge the wrong done to them 17 years after the regime was ousted.

The two activists, along with other human rights victims, are demanding that the government indemnify them.

This time their battlefield is the House of Representatives, and their foes are "Marcos forces" blocking a bill seeking to give them compensation.

Yesterday, Herrera and Ilagan joined several House members in remembering the "turbulent Marcos years" through a photo exhibit titled "17 years after People Power I, Marcos victims still cry for justice."

The activists used the occasion to push for the passage of the measure.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said he and fellow Bayan Muna party-list Representatives Crispin Beltran and Liza Maza will file a resolution "strongly urging President Macapagal-Arroyo . . . to redeem the memory and heed the cry for justice for all the victims of gross human rights violators in the Marcos era...by certifying as urgent House Bill No. 4535 and Senate Bill No. 877."

The House version, "An Act

JUSTICE/ A4

A MOMENT IN TIME
The embrace of a priest and a loyalist soldier said it all then: 17 years ago Edsa was a sea of people, suddenly, dramatically free of the Marcos tyranny.
R. CARPIO/JOHNNY VILLENA

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao including Palawan will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/25/03

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2003

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

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Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

GOV'T-MILF PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

Malaysia, Libya agree to broker talks

By TJ Burgonio

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia and Libya yesterday agreed to act as "go-betweens" in forging a lasting peace agreement between the government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad and Libyan Foreign Minister Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalghem gave their assurances to President Macapagal-Arroyo when they met on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement summit here.

Mahathir and Shalghem promised to help the government "fast-track the peace negotiations" with the MILF, Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said.

Bunye could not say if both countries offered to host the peace talks, however.

With these developments, there would be no reason for the government to press for the declaration of the MILF as a foreign terrorist organization, Bunye said.

"Seeking an FTO (foreign terrorist organization) tag for the MILF is not warranted," he told reporters.

Besides, he said the bomb attack near the Cotabato City airport last week that was initially blamed on the MILF was the handiwork of Abu Sayyaf extremists.

Foreign Secretary Blas F. Ople on Sunday disputed reports that the government was seeking the listing of the MILF as an FTO, saying it was more interested in forging peace with the insurgent group.

In her speech at the NAM's plenary meeting, President Macapagal said that her government hoped to move forward soon with the peace process, "with the generous participation of our allies for peace."

She approved last week the final draft of the peace agreement with the MILF, and gave a six-month deadline for negotiations to be concluded.

Malaysia and Libya had helped facilitate peace negotiations with the MILF in 1992.

Ms Arroyo also met with Bahraini Prime Minister Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, who promised to look after Filipinos working in his country should the Iraq crisis blow up into war, Bunye said.

Al-Khalifa said he intended to visit Manila on Wednesday before flying back to Bahrain, he added.

Libyan Foreign Minister Shalghem also told Ms Macapagal of the Khadaffy Foundation's intention to enter into a joint venture with the National Development Co. for the setting up of a palm oil plantation at the Liguasan Marsh in North Cotabato.

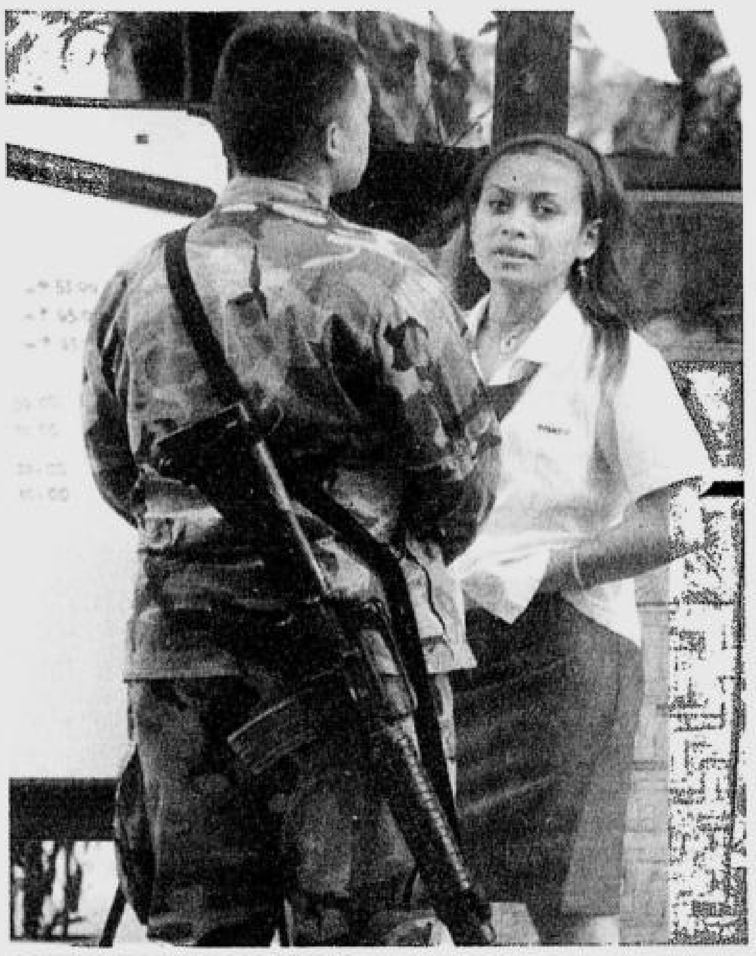
In Cotabato City, a statement from MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said the rebels would not cease launching armed attacks against the military even if they agreed to resume peace negotiations.

"The guerrilla war will go on side by side with the peace talks with the government," Kabalu said.

This has further put into question the validity of the ceasefire agreement, which the MILF and the government had signed in 1997 and which was reinforced by an agreement concluded in Putra Jaya, Malaysia in 2001.

Kabalu said the decision was brought about by the government's "treachery," highlighted by the Pikit crisis that started on Feb. 11.

At least 157 rebels and three soldiers were reportedly killed in the fighting that led to the capture of the Buliok Complex, the MILF's main stronghold straddling the Central Mindanao provinces of North Cotabato and Maguindanao. *Rosa-May V. de Guzman, Edwin O. Fernandez and Charlie C. Senase with reports from Jeffrey M. Tupas, Anthony S. Allada and Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

AN American serviceman, in the country for the Balikatan 03-1 joint military exercises, chats up an unidentified Filipina at AFP Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City. EDWIN BACASMAS

MILF claims retaking 'mansion'

KIDAPAWAN CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front yesterday said it had recaptured MILF leader Salamat Hashim's so-called "mansion" in the Buliok Complex in Pikit, North Cotabato.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said their forces retook the house, which he called an "Islamic center" at dawn yesterday following a three-hour battle with Marines who were occupying it.

Kabalu said the soldiers retreated after they were outnumbered by MILF fighters led by Hadji Samir Salamat, a younger brother of the MILF chair.

There were no details of reported casualties on both sides.

But the military denied the MILF claim, saying it was all "make-believe".

Maj. Julieto Ando, the spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division, said government troops were still occupying the "mansion."

"They are making up that story because they want to convey a message that they are still strong. But the truth is, we already knocked them out last week," Ando said.

Ando, however, conceded the presence of MILF rebels in the area resulting in sporadic clashes.

The military occupied the "mansion" after the guerrillas fled during the first outbreak of clashes early this month.

The military claimed to have recovered from the house documents showing how the MILF trained it forces as bomb-manufacturing manuals.

Kabalu accused the military of planting the documents. He said the house was not Salamat's but was an Islamic Center that was being used as a venue for special gatherings for Muslims.

Yesterday, heavy fighting between the MILF and government soldiers erupted in Barangay Dalengaoen in Pikit. The fighting was still raging as of press time and the military has yet to provide details of the clash. *Jeffrey M. Tupas with reports from Aquiles Z. Zonio and Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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BAR REVIEW CONSORTIUM
The LAW Deans of San Sebastian (Dean Espejo), MLQU (Justice Tuquero), FEU (Dean Bautista) and UE (Justice Suarez) are forming a Bar Review Consortium. The Review will start by the 3rd week of April 2003. Classes will be held from 5-9 p.m. (on Thursdays and Fridays) and 10-12 noon and 2-6 p.m. (on Saturdays and Sundays)
A DREAM TEAM OF LAW DEANS AND JUSTICES
will handle the review. Review materials will be given covering the latest cases and probable questions. Reservation is free. Contact the Law Deans of San Sebastian, MLQU, FEU and UE. Alumni are advised to take their review with the consortium.

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Vet urges GMA: Ask US for more benefits

By Volt Contreras

A RETIRED justice and former World War II guerrilla is asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to demand from Washington a better package of benefits for Filipino veterans.

Manuel Pamaran said the benefits should be equal to those being enjoyed by the veterans' American counterparts.

He said Ms Macapagal should "again send a strong lobby team" to the United States capital, implying that the Philippines was in a position to seek concessions in exchange for the country's all-out support of the US-led war on terrorism.

Lobby group

Pamaran said the team should be "composed of, and be headed by, WWII veterans." He said he was willing to be a member of the lobby group.

He recalled that in February 2000, he was on the team that went to the US Congress to press for the passage of the Filipino Veterans Benefits Act, the Filipino Equity Bill and several related measures.

The former Sandiganbayan presiding justice made the call in his capacity as president of the Hunters ROTC Guerrilla Association and member of the Supreme Council of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines.

He is better known today as the most senior of deposed President Joseph Estrada's defense lawyers in the latter's plunder trial before the Sandiganbayan.

In a phone interview, Pamaran maintained there was "no incompatibility" in his lawyering for Estrada and his appealing to Ms Macapagal on behalf of his fellow veterans.

"I did not take the Estrada case on my own," he explained. "I was only appointed by the court."

'Measly P550'

He noted that Filpino WWII veterans received "a measly P550 a month" in old-age pensions from the national government. "This is not even enough for their basic needs and medicines."

Only some veterans were fortunate to receive P10,000 to P20,000 in burial benefits from their local governments, such as Muntinlupa, Parañaque or Cainta, he said.

He appealed to the President and to local lawmakers to raise the monthly pension to P10,000 and provide burial assistance worth P20,000 for all other veterans.

Senate submits 'survival' budget

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE SENATE committee on finance yesterday submitted a "survival budget" of P804.04 billion for 2003, P160 million less than the P804.2 million proposed by Malacañang, and lower by P1.2 billion than the version approved by the House of Representatives.

Of the amount, about P223 billion will go to debt servicing.

Sen. Manny Villar, committee chair, said the cut came about because of the revised fiscal targets presented by the Development Budget Coordinating Committee for 2003.

The DBCC projected a budget deficit of P202 billion for this year, on expected revenues of P584.1 billion and disbursements of P786.1 billion.

Villar described the Senate-proposed national budget as both responsive and responsible, and anchored on the principle of "survival of the fittest and elimination of the unfit."

Net cut

He said the reduction resulted in a net cut of about P154 million in programmed appropriations and about P1 billion in unprogrammed appropriations.

He urged the government to make full use of its scant resources in order to win the "survival game."

"We are not yet economically capable to play in the games of kings and queens. Our present concern is only to win the game of survival," Villar said.

He said the government should use the budget to improve the lives of the people in the grassroots by focusing on basic services like health, shelter, education, agriculture and security.

"We need to survive and give our future generations a fighting chance in this world," he said.

Villar said the committee took into consideration various external and internal concerns such as the impact of a possible war in Iraq on the economy, a decrease in the supply of oil, inflation and the ballooning budget deficit.

He saw no need to pass a supplemental budget for as long as the government does not play an active role in the imminent war in the Middle East.

"I'm not in favor of any supplemental budget. Any budget for the absentee voting must be included in this year's budget. I don't think we will have the time to pass any supplemental budget," he said.

Parameters

In formulating the national budget, Villar said the committee was constrained by parameters which were beyond its control.

Villar said that fixed expenditures alone account for 80 percent of the total budget. These included personal services (34 percent), debt servicing (17 percent) and Internal Revenue Allotments (17.1 percent).

He said the committee was given leeway only to work on the remaining 20 percent of the total budget of which 11 percent, or P85 billion, goes to maintenance and other operating expenses, and the remaining 9 percent, or P74 billion, for capital outlay.

Financial state

Villar said the amount would not be enough to radically change the country's present financial state and achieve economic development.

Of the government departments and agencies, the education department got the bulk of the budget at P106.539 billion.

Next came public works, P56.332 billion; defense, P42.596 bilion; local governments, P44.46 billion; and agriculture, P19.915 billion.

Other allocations were as follows: state universities and colleges, P16.78 billion; health, P11.271 billion; transportation, P9.558 billion; judiciary, P7.636 billion; finance, P7.047 million; and environment, P6.268 billion.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the committee on finance's sub-committee "J," recommended a P90.86 million increase in the Senate budget.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Senate would be holding morning and afternoon sessions next week to work on the budget and hope to have a new budget by early next month.

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Threats delay Cebu Pacific flights

TWO bomb threats—one directed at an airplane bound for Zamboanga City where US forces have started military exercises—caused mild panic and delayed flights at the Manila Domestic Airport yesterday while bomb experts scoured the two aircraft.

Initial investigation conducted by the PNP Aviation Security Group showed unidentified persons placed separate calls to the cargo office of Cebu Pacific Air to warn that there were bombs aboard the airline's flights to Zamboanga and Bacolod cities.

The threats were received within 15 minutes of each other, at 4:30 a.m. and 4:45 a.m.

Zamboanga City is the site of military training exercises between Filipino and American troops.

After more than an hour of looking for the bombs with sniffer dogs, police declared the threats a hoax.

Flight 473 bound for Bacolod with 38 passengers was finally cleared for take-off at 6:26 a.m., while Flight 851 bound for Zamboanga with 115 passengers took off at 6:48 a.m.

When the Bacolod-bound plane landed in that city, GMA-7 News reported, several kilos of shabu were found in its cargo hold. *Norman Bordadora, with an AFP report*

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Justice still eludes victims …

From page A1

Providing Compensation to the Victims of Human Rights Violations during the Marcos Regime and for Other Purposes" is a consolidation of several bills. It is now being reconsidered for second reading.

Akbayan Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, chair of the human rights committee which tackled the bill, said the bill was approved on second reading last year. It is being reconsidered now because Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos complained about it before the House rules committee.

"She (Imee) can't live with the bill and she said it would be subjudice to discuss it because there was a pending Supreme Court ruling," Rosales told the INQUIRER.

The high court is set to decide whether the Swiss Marcos deposits in an escrow account, now valued at $750 million, would go to the government.

Marie Hilao Enriquez, national secretary general of Selda, a group of Marcos human rights victims, said Ilocos representatives like Salacnib Baterina were attempting to "dilute" the House bill by pushing certain amendments.

Enriquez said the so-called "Marcos bloc" in the House wanted the bill to cover human rights victims during the administrations of former Presidents Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada.

INQUIRER
It's all over; Marcos flees!

IT'S ALL OVER. Unidentified man waves historic copy of the INQUIRER announcing the flight of the Marcoses from Malacañang. PDI PHOTO

If the amendments were accepted, "Marcos will be exculpated," Enriquez said.

Rosales said she was open to a "generic law but (let's) give some preference to Marcos victims." The Akbayan representative said the proposed law would have a "universal character" and would apply to future administrations.

Herrera, who was detained in Bicutan for a month after her arrest in April 1977, said human rights victims like her had been waiting for so long in getting justice and compensation that a US federal court had awarded them.

Herrera, head of the Dagat Dagatan chapter of Selda, said that eight members had already died without getting compensation.

She told the crowd before the opening of the photo exhibit about how her military captors tortured her into acknowledging she was a member of the Communist Party of the Philippines. But she said she was the president of an association in Tondo fighting government eviction at the time.

Still she was picked up and sent to Camp Crame in Quezon City. During an interrogation, live electric wires were attached to her body.

She said the bill would help human rights victims like her. "The bill will send signals to future dictators that they can't just do this," said Herrera, now a barangay chair in Dagat Dagatan, Caloocan City.

For Ilagan, who was detained by the military for two years for his alleged ties to the underground movement, the issue was "more than compensation."

"The passage of the bill is a small but concrete step toward attaining justice for the victims," Ilagan, a writer, told the INQUIRER.

More importantly, he said the bill, if passed into law, would be an acknowledgment of government accountability to the Marcos victims.

Ilagan lost a sister during martial law. She was one of the "Southern Tagalog 10," a group of UP Los Baños teachers and students who disappeared in 1977. They were believed to have been murdered by the military.

Representatives Beltran, Maza, Benigno Aquino III, Exequiel Javier and Del de Guzman, who were present at the photo exhibit, are supporting the immediate passage of the bill.

GMA order gives Bobi broad, sweeping …

From page A1

the new order to formally define the powers and duties of the presidential chief of staff, the post Tiglao assumed in January.

The "direct services" Tiglao is to provide the President appear broad and sweeping enough that he can be justified in laying claim to the informal title of "Little President," by tradition accorded solely to the Executive Secretary.

These include:

- "Managing the day-to-day schedule of the President," with his office having the power to "determine and recommend to the President the activities which shall be personally attended by the President."
- "Providing the President with strategic planning functions."
- "Providing coordination of the policy formulation process at the President's level."
- "Ensuring the monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects being undertaken by the government."
- "Ensuring greater participation of the citizenry in the government's reform agenda by enhancing the President's public communications systems."

Necessary assistance

According to Administrative Order No. 62 signed by President Macapagal on Feb. 12, Tiglao "may call upon any agency of the government for such assistance as may be necessary in the performance of its functions."

Tiglao will also have "supervision of the President's National Security Briefing Room, which shall be responsible for providing regional situationer reports to the President on a real time basis."

For the "enhancing of the President's public communications systems," Tiglao will also "coordinate, for the specific purpose of formulating and implementing the President's public communications programs, the following offices: the Office of the Press Secretary and the Office of the Presidential Spokesperson."

The phrasing—coordinate the offices instead of coordinate with them—suggests that Tiglao will exercise control over Secretary Ignacio Bunye, who replaced him as spokesperson, and Hernani Braganza, the press secretary he tangled with earlier this year.

Tiglao will also "coordinate closely with" the Presidential Management Staff, the agency responsible for providing the staff work the President needs.

In the case of the Office of the Executive Secretary, AO 62 reads: "To ensure close coordination, the outputs of the presidential advisers and assistants shall be submitted to the President through the Executive Secretary, copy furnished the OPCS."

As chief of staff, Tiglao will also "coordinate" the following offices: the Appointments Office, the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Socials, the Office of the Protocol Affairs, the Correspondence Office and the Internal House Affairs Office.

Tiglao will be assisted by one senior deputy chief of staff, two deputy chiefs, three assistant secretaries, and "such number of directorial and other administrative staff" deemed necessary.

In his last press briefing in January, Tiglao said that he would be on top of the "reform agenda" that President Macapagal wanted to implement during her remaining months in office.

ALLY
D PEACE

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo claps after the release of the doves symbolizing the group's yearning for peace in the Middle East. At left is El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde. Also in photo are Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte. AP

Iglesia mad at GMA for turning rally …

From page A1

participate in what was supposed to be a non-partisan event. But, as it turned out, politicians and government officials, headed by no less than President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself, came uninvited to the prayer rally," Manalo added.

He said INC members did not attend the prayer rally, except for a minister, Isaias Samson Jr., who was sent to say the INC prayer for peace, and the INC Tabernacle Choir that rendered a hymn.

The INC said it did not advise its members to attend the event because of apprehension that the occasion might be used for partisan purposes.

"We do not regret having very little participation in the peace rally in view of what it turned out to be," Manalo said.

Some 250,000 people, mostly members of El Shaddai, attended the prayer rally.

MANALO: Politicians' speeches made a parody of prayer"

Manalo said the INC was "seriously considering the possibility of withdrawing" from the Bangon Pilipino Movement as the movement could be used by politicians and businessmen for their own vested interests. *Donna S. Cueto*

Sick mama sues for time for Justine …

From page A1

do has been blocked as a result of a standoff in Congress over the issue of money laundering.

Ricardo, 43, a communications technician in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, earns about P30,000 a month, including overtime.

Late last month, he sent $350, about P17,500, he borrowed from a co-worker for his wife's medical bills. (He returned to the Middle East on Jan. 17 after spending his Christmas break here.) Normally, the money would be in a local bank in three days, but up until last week, it was not yet available.

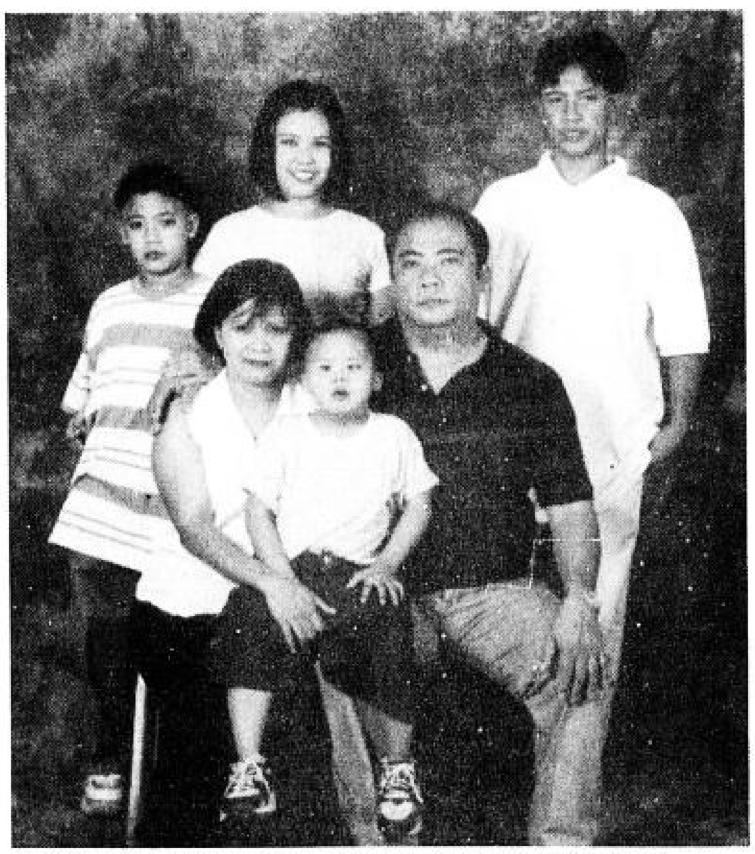
Interviewed by phone, Ricardo said he was told by his bank in Jeddah that the delay had to do with "money laundering," something he could not understand as he had been using the same bank for five years.

He has been sending money to his family through "Tele-Money," a door-to-door money forwarding service tied to the remittance operations of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

The Jeddah bank advised Ricardo that if he could no longer wait, he could get his money back and remit it through another bank, but he would have to pay 30 Saudi rials (about P500). He declined. Apart from shelling out the service fee, he is unsure whether bank-to-bank transfers will work given the situation.

Ricardo is not alone. He hasn't been able to check regularly on his remittances because each time he goes to the bank, he usually finds long queues of expatriate workers who are also having problems with their remittances.

Ricardo's bank in Jeddah has apparently decided to take its time with transactions from the Philippines because of an ongoing review of the country's status as a haven for money launderers.



FLOR Jasmin de Valencia poses with her family before she was diagnosed to be suffering from cancer of the kidney. With her are husband Ricardo, sons Justine, Jetrick and Jeff, and daughter Rowena.

Sanctions

The Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) has threatened to slap the Philippines with additional countermeasures starting March 15 if the government fails to plug what it calls loopholes in the country's anti-money laundering law.

Congress beat a deadline to pass amendments to the law, but the FATF, set up by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, said the new measures failed to address "previously identified deficiencies" in the law.

On Feb. 13, the House of Representatives and the Senate ratified amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Law (Amla) lowering the threshold for automatic reporting of bank transactions to P500,000 and allowing the probing of accounts without a court order in cases of suspected kidnapping, hijacking and drug trafficking.

The FATF wants Congress to allow regulators to look into suspicious accounts without a court order, lower the threshold to P500,000 and the changes to apply to accounts before Amla took effect in October 2001.

The task force is sending a team to the country this week to confer with senators on the anti-money laundering law. Last week, the Senate agreed to reconsider the ratification of the conference committee report amending the law.

Senate Majority Leader Loren Legarda, meanwhile, called for the creation of an inter-agency body to monitor and fasttrack the remittances of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in preparation for a possible imposition of additional counter-measures against the country.

Several groups of OFWs have expressed apprehension over reports that their remittances to their families will be delayed, aside from being charged additional processing fees.

Legarda said the proposed inter-agency body, consisting of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, would formulate a system establishing a door-to-door remittance mechanism to fasttrack the remittances of OFWs.

Suffer some more

With nothing definite so far, however, the Valencia family will just have to suffer some more.

Jasmin has already lost 20 pounds since she was diagnosed with cancer, and she desperately needs a kidney transplant that will cost her about P500,000.

Ricardo's 24-year-old daughter, Rowena, quit her job so she could take care of her mother full time. She is looking for a job closer to home. Without money for tuition, Ricardo's 13-year-old son, Jetrick, had to skip school.

Ricardo's remittance has been his family's only source of income. "I have been running to nearly all my friends, even those I haven't seen in years. Sometimes, I feel like I'm collecting contributions for my own wake," Jasmin said.

She found herself losing hope quite a number of times. "How can you not cry? We had always been hard-pressed to make do with the money that my husband was earning before I got sick. Now, nearly 90 percent of his salary will go to me," she said.

Sometimes, Jasmin said, she can't help but think, "Why not give up?"

"Why wait for our debts to pile up if, in the end, I am going to die?" she asked.

Bicol priests to ask brides: Are you … ?

From page A1

priest determine whether or not a wedding ceremony should proceed.

A new diocesan regulation withholds the sacrament of matrimony from "infanticipating" women who dare seek it. To make sure his direction is "strictly" observed, Bishop Jose Sorra instructed his priests to pop the question before scheduling the hallowed rite, apparently believing it had farther-reaching implications than "Will you marry me?"

In a pastoral letter read by Auxilliary Bishop Lucilo Quiambao last Sunday, Sorra said a pregnant bride in front of the altar, receiving the church's blessing before the congregation, "contradicted" the essence of the sacrament.

He pointed out that the very reason a bride traditionally wore white was to symbolize her "virginity" or "purity."

The subject of non-virgin grooms, or members of the congregation with less than pure wishes for the couple, was not raised.

However, Sorra said, the ban did not mean that the woman would forever be doomed to a life of unwedded bliss. He suggested that the man take her to the altar after she delivers the baby.

And what if a tainted twosome insists on being wed *ngonyan na* (right now)? "The ceremony could be held anywhere inside the church, except at the altar," the bishop said. He did not explain how other parts of the same place of worship would be less defiled by the "contradiction" to the sacrament.

HINDE NA P'WEDE ANG "I DID" SA KASAL

He did say, however, that when saying "I do," a pregnant woman looked ridiculous in the eyes of the congregation. Expressing it in the past or future tense might not help, either.

While Sorra's manifest objection to pre-marital sex is supported by the Church, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday said the diocesan policy was "not applicable nationwide."

Which should also mean, for the benefit of many recent celebrity brides, that neither was it retroactive.

Quoting Msgr. Hernando Coronel, executive director, the CBCP information office said "the matter" had never been formally taken up by the conference.

Brides on the brink, especially those leaning towards "I probably am," might take a cue from other CBCP officials—including Bishop Orlando Quevedo, president—who have decided that mum's the word for now. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and Armand Nocum in Manila*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Drugs with PPA more dangerous, BFAD now says

By Armand N. Nocum

THE BUREAU of Food and Drugs said yesterday that medicines containing phenylpropanolamine (PPA) may be far more dangerous than originally believed.

In issuing BFAD Advisory No. 2003-0002, bureau Director Leticia Barbara B. Gutierrez said cough and cold medicines containing PPA could cause blindness and enlargement of the prostrate in patients taking them.

Gutierrez said people should "be careful" when taking drugs with PPA if they suffer from any of the following: high blood pressure, toxic goiter, benign prostatic hypertrophy (enlargement of the prostrate), irregular heart rate, glaucoma, or are taking anti-depressant drugs.

She said adults could take medicines containing 25 milligrams of PPA every six hours. Children 7 to 12-year-olds could take the same dose, while children 2-6 years old should take medicines containing only 6.25 mg of PPA. But she advised the public to consult a doctor before taking such medicines.

She said, however, that "PPA is safe and effective" if taken in the right dose and only when one is suffering from "nasal stuffiness due to the common cold, allergic rhinitis and sinusitis."

A Yale University study had found that medicines with PPA could cause hemorrhagic stroke or bleeding in the brain.

The US Food and Drug Administration declared PPA unsafe for use, prompting its pullout from the American market.

Talk on beads set

AUTHOR and collector Ramon Villegas, an authority on all types of beads, will be the featured speaker at a lecture on "Collectible Beads" at the National Museum on Saturday, March 8.

"Of Collectors, Artists, Craftsmen and Objets d'art" is the theme of the museum's Lectures 2003 series co-sponsored by the Museum Foundation of the Philippines Inc. and held every second Saturday of the month.

Villegas will discuss all types of beads, including stone, glass, shell, metal, terra cotta and beads made of organic materials and synthetics.

Those attending the lecture are encouraged to bring along their heirloom beads for a "show and tell."

The lecture starts at 10 a.m. at the 4th floor of the Museum of the Filipino People (former Finance Bldg), Rizal Park, Manila. Registration starts at 9:30 a.m.

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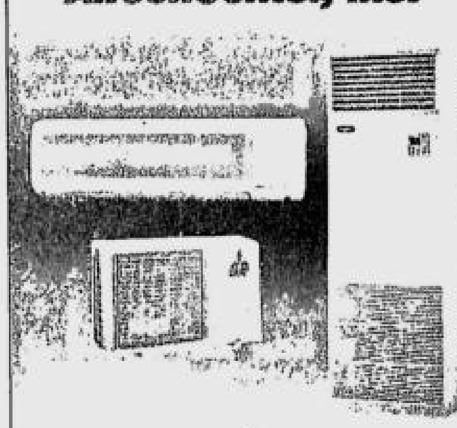

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Real change

EDITORIAL

IT WAS a revolution like no other. It was a bloodless revolution, but it was something more than Gandhi's non-violent freedom movement. It was unprecedented in the history of the world—a people protecting the military instead of the other way around.

It had elements of Greek tragedy—a defenseless, fragile widow, avenging the murder of her husband, leading her people to overthrow a powerful, corrupt dictator. It was a "smiling revolution," the counterpart of Ferdinand Marcos' supposedly "smiling martial law." The people, using prayers and flowers, won their struggle against the dictator's tanks and cannons with their mere presence in the hundreds of thousands.

The people stayed for four days on a long stretch of Epifanio de los Santos (the Epiphany of the Saints) Avenue, a name since shortened to Edsa. On those four glorious days when Edsa seemed to be the center of the world, the people provided the center of moral gravity and pulled off a miracle: a bloodless revolution.

The Edsa Revolution accomplished its immediate objective, which was to oust the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. But did it accomplish its long-term objectives? Did it bring about a change in the nation's life? Did it lead to the eradication of graft and corruption? Did it result in better governance? Did it inspire a change in the ruling elite? Did it promote self-discipline and respect for the rule of law among the people? Sadly, we must admit that the answer to these questions is a big "No."

In the beginning, several months after Edsa, there were some changes. For instance, at the Manila International Airport, one would see signs saying, "*Bawal ang lagay* (Bribes are prohibited)." But after some time, the signs disappeared and we presume the people who used to accept bribes were again having a merry time at the airport. It was all *ningas cogon,* a temporary thing, like a prairie brushfire. There was backsliding among government officials and the people alike and soon it was "business as usual."

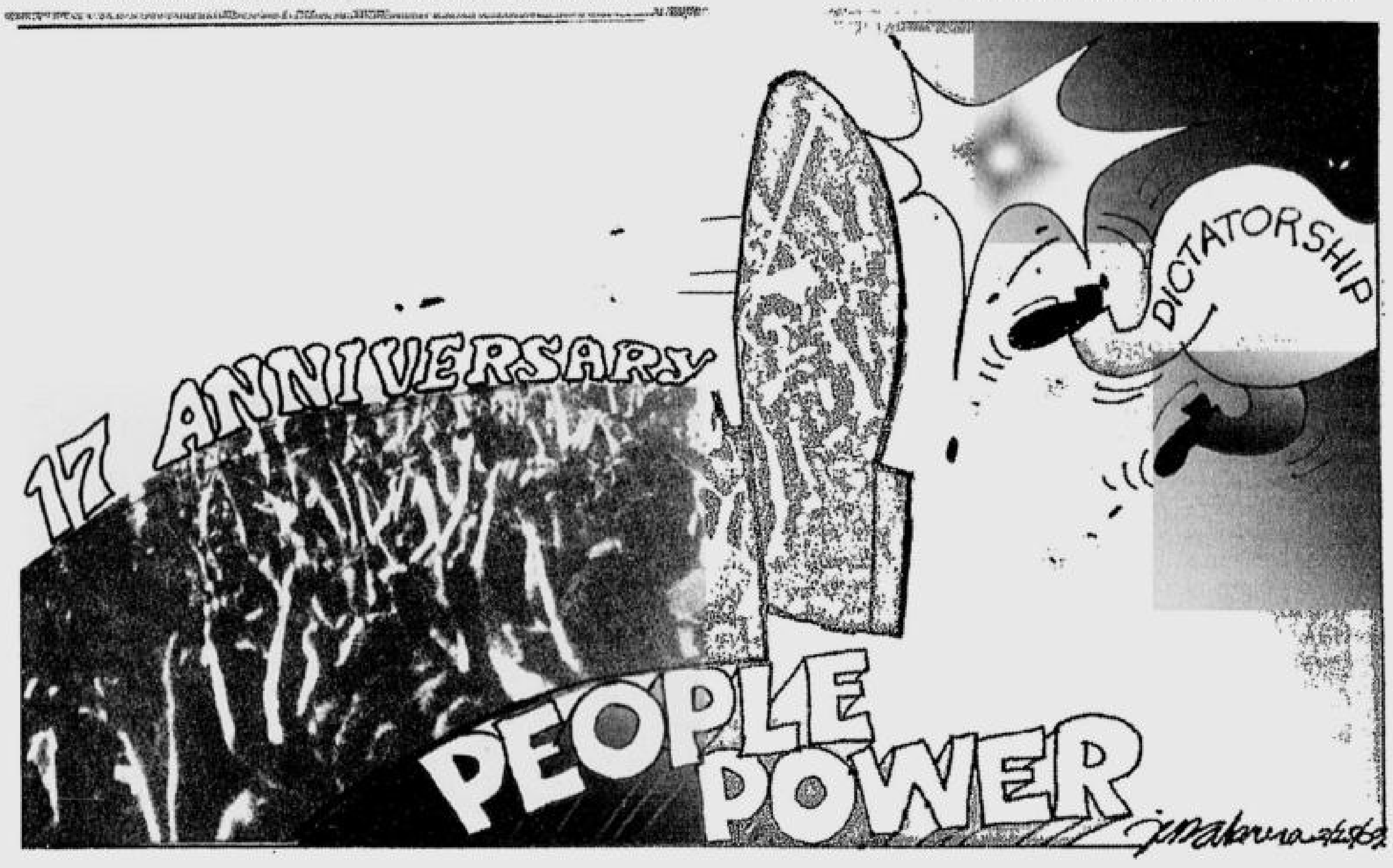
Who are to blame for the failure of the Edsa Revolution to bring about real change in our nation? First, the nation's leaders because they have not provided leadership by example. They have not looked after the interest of the masses but only after their own, selfish interests. For instance, many have yielded to the temptations of graft and corruption. Bribes and raids on the treasury are now no longer reckoned in the hundreds of thousands or millions of pesos but in the billions.

A culture of impunity has hardened. The big fish never get punished for murder, torture, graft or plunder. They get off scot-free; some even get elected or appointed to higher offices. Up to now the brain behind the assassination of Sen. Benigno S. Aquino Jr. has not been identified. Up to now the relatives, officials, cronies of the dictator Marcos who stole billions have not been tried, penalized and ordered to return their loot to the people. Military and police officers responsible for the torture, disappearance and execution of thousands of martial law prisoners have not been charged, tried and punished. Many of them are occupying even higher positions now.

Second, the people are also to blame for the present sorry state of affairs. Edsa for them was a one-shot affair. They thought that after they had ousted the dictator, their work was done. Let the others do the follow-up work. But no, if we want this government to be a real government of the people, by the people and for the people, we, the people, must work to make it so, and work not just occasionally but every day. Perhaps the people should be reminded that—to paraphrase a saying—eternal vigilance is the price of democracy and good government.

The people cannot adopt a *"Bahala na"* attitude toward government. They have to constantly monitor the work of their officials to see that they are serving the interests of the people and that they are not dipping their hands into the national treasury. They have to exert pressure on their representatives to pass laws that benefit the masses. They have to make sure that the judiciary is incorruptible and that it dispenses justice to rich and poor alike.

Edsa I was mounted by the people and it accomplished its immediate objective. But when shall we see the accomplishment of its long-term objective, which is to bring about a real transformation in the nation's political, economic and social life?



The 'smoking guns' against Agile

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

OFFICIALS of the pro-American Macapagal administration are trying to portray Agile, the American lobby group, as a benign bunch of "consultants" and "advisers" helping government agencies. Secret documents I found show otherwise. They prove that Agile is a dangerous group with a smiling face but with a dagger tucked in its belt. Far from helping the government, it works at cross-purposes with the government, to the extent of even preventing the implementation of orders issued by the President herself. Here are the smoking guns:

In a memorandum to Dr. Joseph Ryan, CTD, Agile, asking for approval of a request to hire, again, the services of PRISM, a public relations outfit, Dr. David Tardif-Douglin, managing director of Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI), boasted that his "team successfully halted the implementation of (the President's) E.O. 59 and is beginning to establish direct competition to the government port monopoly."

The smoking gun also showed that the supposedly independent industry groups lobbying for open skies and port modernization are actually dummies of Agile. "A key ingredient in the success of (the port and air transport) teams is the role of external pressure groups through the Freedom to Fly Coalition (FFC) and the Coalition for Shipping and Ports Modernization (CSPM)," said the memorandum. "From March 15 to July 31, 2001, PRISM designed, managed and implemented all media efforts for these Coalitions. PRISM produced all weekly press releases, drafted coalition statements, and managed and coordinated press conferences and media briefings... For this contract, PRISM will develop a new strategy in light of recent developments..."

What could this new strategy be? Maybe, just maybe, black propaganda.

Another smoking gun, a "strictly confidential" internal memo of PRISM, outlined just such a plan against members of Congress and a group of Filipino businessmen. The PRISM memo dated Feb. 18, 2003, said:

"As per info I gave you on the phone, various dailies will be coming out tomorrow with stories quoting Senators Recto, Arroyo, Osmeña, Representative Saludo and others denouncing Agile, DAI, and USAID for their interference in policymaking decisions in finance, energy, education, BIR, Customs, DAR, DA, NEDA, DOTC, etc.

"I met with Mon Clarete and Dave Douglin last night and they suggested that we launch immediately a counter propa designed to ridicule and deflect the issue, using our existing files on Lucio Tan, Lucio Jr., Harry Tan, General Mison, Joseph Chua, (these are people behind Macro-Asia and Basic Holdings), and their lackeys in the Senate and House with emphasis that they are the ones orchestrating and financing the anti-US sentiments of the country.

"They told me the ambassador has the same info and he's very worried.

"I'll prepare tomorrow three sets of stories for your approval. Please give me a call right away as soon as you give the green light for implementation and the usual release of funds."

It is not only the "ambassador" who is worried. Malacañang also is. Press Secretary Hernani Braganza called the public relations staff of the BIR and other agencies to a meeting to coordinate a counter-propaganda plan. Last Feb. 13, a certain person purportedly from the Malacañang Press Office, so I was told, distributed press releases and envelopes to the media.

A memorandum for the President from the Cabinet Secretary has this entry:

"Secretary Camacho noted that they are hiring a PR consultant to prepare a campaign plan for three bills: Securitization Act, the Nara bill (which will abolish the BIR and privatize it) and the Indexation of Sin Taxes. Said plan will be submitted to the Office of the Executive Secretary for approval. Romulo requested Secretary Camacho to coordinate with the OPS in the preparation of the campaign plan."

Media should watch out and guard against stories planted by these pro-American, anti-Filipino groups. Don't believe the line that Agile is only helping the government. Come on, it is not doing all this manipulating out of the goodness of its heart. It is doing these things to favor American interests.

* * *

Here's more bad news. The National Electrification Administration (NEA) badly needs new leadership. It has been out of step with the government's program to deregulate the power sector and to reduce the reliance of the nation's 119 electric cooperatives on government loans and subsidies. Its current administrator, Fr. Francisco Silva, has failed to provide that leadership. The NEA is adrift and has not even moved to meet its mandate under the Epira law.

A former NEA deputy administrator has already secured an early endorsement from Malacañang's office of appointments to be the next NEA head. This guy, who was appointed by Erap even if he was the vendor/supplier to electric coops, was removed from the NEA for doing nothing but seek equipment supply deals with electric cooperatives mainly in Nueva Ecija, Tarlac and Pampanga. Over the years, the NEA has always been a target of politicos preparing to run for office. No wonder it is a mess.

There is a bad news for those aspiring administrators, however. There is no more money in the NEA. Its budget and organization are being shrunk under the power deregulation law. Its loan to the coops have been condoned by law.

A life in full

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"GOOD evening. I imagine all of you would like to see me. The feeling is mutual. But much as I want to, I cannot. I tire easily. And I would not want to spoil a night of music. Enjoy the night, it will make me happy....

"As most of you know, I've been in and out of the hospital. I've been undergoing chemo sessions. It's the only way, I've been told. What can I do? What can I do? Rather than surrender without a fight, I hold on, cherishing every moment. And I can tell you that each moment is a bit of hope....

"Thank you. Enjoy the music. Treasure each moment of living and loving. Life is beautiful. Life is precious."

This was part of a message sent by Gina Alunan-Melgar in October last year. At the time, Gina's intestinal cancer had advanced to a critical degree, and friends and relatives rushed to raise funds for her medication through a concert at 70s Bistro. Noel Cabangon, Gary Granada and Cooky Chua gave unhesitatingly and unstintingly of their time, proving that great artists and great human beings are not a contradiction in terms; the one is often the source of the other.

Gina wanted to go to Bistro, where she had been countless times in the past, never one to shirk mixing work with pleasure, but this time she couldn't. She was at the Kidney Center, where she had been spending a great deal of her time. But she kept track of the night's proceedings through the phone and spoke briefly to the audience through it. I have no doubt she completely meant that part about not wanting to spoil the night by drawing attention to herself, particularly in the condition she was in. She was always like that, someone whose capacity for empathy, for feeling other people's pain or joy, or for plain considerateness, had few peers. "Enjoy the night, it will make me happy," she said. I believed it.

Gina died last Friday afternoon in her home, peacefully according to Jun, her husband. She complained of numbness a couple of hours before, and slipped quietly into eternal sleep shortly afterward. None of that suggests how she lived, and how she tenaciously fought off the coming of night, refusing to go gently into it.

Gina learned the bad news on the month that offered only good news for the country. It was shortly after Edsa II, when everyone was celebrating the downfall of a tyrant. She brought someone to the airport, and on the way home could no longer bear the pain in her stomach. She went straight to the hospital, where the X-rays showed a cancer that had spread throughout her intestines. They operated on her, but the doctors were not optimistic about the results. They gave her a few months to live. I remember that we (my wife is Gina's first cousin) debated whether to tell her the full extent of what the doctors said. In the end, we decided to do so. If Gina had shown anything in life, it was that, unlike Tom Cruise, she **could** handle the truth.

Indeed, if Gina had shown anything in life, it was that she could buck the odds. She had been a fighter for most of her life, struggling in particular for the rights of the overseas workers against often indifferent, cynical and hostile governments, including our own. She helped found a number of organizations helping migrant labor variously as halfway house, refuge and counselor, among them the Mission for Filipino Migrant Workers, the Union of Filipinos in Hong Kong, Kanlungan, the Asian Center for Women's Workers Rights and Balikbayani. Despite adversity, which included harassment in countries that did not believe workers had rights, she managed to bring no small aid and comfort to overseas Filipino maids in particular.

As she defied the odds in work, so she defied the odds in life. The doctors gave Gina a few months to live in January 2001. She lived a full two years, continuing to fight for the right of Filipino workers abroad to live decently even as she fought for her right to just live. She continued to laugh and find joy in her work, though the pain must have been excruciating, getting sustenance largely from intravenous injections. Last Christmas, she looked only like a shadow of her former self—indeed like a victim of the Holocaust—but so only physically. She joked and told stories with her cousins and looked forward to another year. She was devastated in body, but not so in spirit. In spirit, she was triumphant.

We did wrestle in the hollow corners of our minds with the metaphysical question of whether it made sense to try to cling to life at all costs. Whether at some point it wasn't better to give up and embrace the inevitable. But each time, Gina refuted the wisdom of surrender by the unassailable argument of her continuing vibrancy. With every hour of her struggle to live, she showed that it was possible for the blood to pulse less and less in the veins but for awe and wonder to pulse so thunderously in the mind. With every minute of her struggle to live, she showed that it was possible for the breath to be pushed out of the lungs but for love and laughter to push out from the heart, like a broken fire hydrant. With every second of her struggle to live, she showed that it was possible for the flesh to peel away like a landscape eroded by the centuries but for life to fill to the brim and overflow in the soul.

Over these last two years, Gina has given me personally to appreciate whole new dimensions in the awesomeness of life. Each moment is a bit of hope. Treasure each moment of living and loving. Life is beautiful. Life is precious. These are more than trite sayings, these are explosions of truth. Take it from someone who has lived and laughed and loved, seizing from every second of life all the riches it could yield.

Take it from someone who has lived a life in full.

Remembering Ninoy

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Sunday, the INQUIRER came out with a hitherto unpublished photo showing Ninoy Aquino walking in Boston with former Constitutional Convention delegates and fellow exiles Heherson Alvarez and Jose Calderon, just days before he was to meet his death at the Manila International Airport on Aug. 21, 1983. The photo showed the group in a somber and thoughtful mood, with Ninoy's and Alvarez's heads deeply bowed. The INQUIRER caption said "the journey to Edsa 1 began with Benigno 'Ninoy' Aquino. His martyrdom was a shot heard around the world."

For today's 17th anniversary of Edsa I, I asked Alvarez, now the presidential adviser on overseas Filipinos, to recount that last meeting with Ninoy. Here is what he wrote:

* * *

"About the second week of August 1983, my family was eating supper in our flat in New York City when I got a call from Ninoy in Boston. He said he was definitely coming home by Aug. 21. He had heard Marcos was going to undergo a kidney transplant and, sensing Marcos could die, Ninoy said he was committing himself to a mission to convince the dictator to return democracy to the Philippines peacefully, so as to avert a civil war. He planned to leave soon, passing by some places, including Malaysia. I told Ninoy I would come up to say goodbye, so I immediately called Tata Pepe Calderon and coaxed him to drive us in his brand new car to Boston early next morning.

"We found Ninoy typing his arrival statement, which he kept revising and testing on us. We went to Mass with him that morning and the mood was solemn and somber. The worst scenario he described was that he would be assassinated, but he had prepared himself for martyrdom, which he regarded as 'a more meaningful death than dying in a car accident.' We were hopeful, however, that the worst that would happen was that he would be kept under house arrest or in prison once again.

"Initially the plan was for me to return home with him, but he suggested that I stay in case anything happens, so that there would be some leadership to help rally people to the cause overseas and provide a quick conduit for news and lobby work in the US Congress. Besides, Ninoy was the godfather of my daughter Xilca, and he felt my two kids were still too young and I should stay and provide for them. He felt that the times were uncertain, and that the regime could strike at me or my family any time, the way it murdered my brother Marsman. Ninoy had been a family man in Boston and relished every moment of it, and he expressed deep appreciation for Cory's support, saying 55 percent of his success was due to her steadfastness. 'For this I'm ever grateful,' he said.

"As we prepared to drive back to New York City, we hugged each other like long-lost brothers, and he gave me his beautiful unique flower-carved leather attache case, saying it was a gift from his mother, Aurora Aquino. He was bequeathing it to me, as well as some stationery with his signature, to facilitate statements that had to be transmitted overseas for our human rights struggle, particularly if he would be thrown into solitary confinement. At that point, Ninoy was giving something of himself to his close friends and colleagues, including his car. We parted with tears in our eyes.

"Ninoy is a true patriot and statesman. His death paved the way for Edsa People Power."

* * *

Reports said President Macapagal-Arroyo "scolded" the Philippine National Police for its failure to "liberate" the country's streets from petty crime. Even as ranking police officials sought to downplay GMA's scolding, PNP statistics showed that cases of robbery and theft all over the country rose 26 percent to a total of 18,054 in 2002, compared to 14,407 in 2001. It's safe to assume that these figures should be higher as many petty crimes are unreported, Nonetheless, PNP Director-General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. ordered the advance deployment and increased visibility of policemen in areas where the crime rate is high, such as Metro Manila.

* * *

A few weeks earlier, Interior Secretary Jose Lina, who has supervision over the PNP, met with media women over dinner, and one of the issues he took up was the need to beef up the severely undermanned police force. Lina pointed out that New York City and Metro Manila have roughly the same population, 11 million, but NYC has about 49,000 policemen armed with the latest equipment and working in three shifts, whereas Metro Manila has about 15,000 policemen, part of the 105,000 police force nationwide watching over a population of nearly 80 million. The ideal ratio, Lina stressed, is one policeman to every 500 inhabitants, but in the metropolis, it's one policeman to 738 people working nearly 24 hours straight.

From California, where he is waiting to have a liver transplant, Sen. Rene Cayetano, expressed similar alarm over the rise in petty crime in Metro Manila, and asked his Congress colleagues to authorize the recruitment of more officers to boost police visibility. To attain the ideal ratio of one officer for every 500 people, Cayetano said, will require the recruitment and deployment of an additional 45,000 officers.

* * *

Lina admitted that the police force is "undermanned, under-trained, under-equipped and underpaid in the sense that they don't enjoy overtime pay for what is oftentimes 24-hour work." He also conceded that economic difficulties drive people to petty crimes. But among the plus factors is the continuing effort of the PNP to professionalize its ranks. In 2002 the number of PNP personnel who underwent education and training increased by 78 percent over 2001. There was also a 48-percent reduction in the number of administrative cases filed against PNP personnel.

(*To be continued.*)

Meeting Patch Adams

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SO galvanized was Jim Paredes of the Apo by his encounter with "the real" Patch Adams, M.D., that he couldn't keep the experience to himself and shared it with everyone on his e-mail list.

Just reading the account of Jim, himself a man of many parts, being a singer/songwriter/author/environmentalist, I was intrigued by this medical doctor who sought to turn the medical profession on its ear and had a movie made about his life as a result.

Many will remember Robin Williams' essay the role of Patch Adams, a man who had turned suicidal and was confined in an asylum until another patient showed him the key to a meaningful life: helping other people find joy. If I recall right, "Patch Adams" the movie was a top box-office draw in the United States when it opened. No wonder Patch Adams, the man and the doctor, is such an inspiration to people in the medical and healing professions, though as Jim's account shows, his appeal extends far beyond the medical and health field.

I'm reprinting here, with Jim's permission, his original account of how it was to see Patch Adams in the flesh, and tomorrow, I will share more anecdotes that Jim managed to gather about this iconoclast and pioneer of the medical branch known as "healing by laughing."

* * *

I WAS able to watch Patch Adams M.D. give a talk for Biomedis (a drug firm) at the Midtown Hotel. Imagine, THE REAL Patch Adams, the man Robin Williams portrayed in the movie of the same name, but much much more...He came in, a man over six feet tall, hair down to his waist in a ponytail, one half of it dyed blue, wearing a clown costume sans the big shoes. He does not have regular straight clothes. He arrived in the Philippines wearing THAT! He spreads compassion and joy for a living while practicing medicine.

I have not met a more real person in my entire life. He talks about his life as a doctor who "relates" with his patients vs. engaging in "business transactions to give them the medicine they need." He does not have malpractice insurance and has never been sued. As he argues: "How can you sue anyone who truly cares for you?" He has never charged for treatment and has never turned down anyone. He started in a clinic with 20 people (family, doctors and nurses) living there and they were able to treat more than 15,000 patients, all for free.

Last year, he went to Afghanistan with 30 other volunteer doctors from all over the world to "clown around" (as he calls it) in Kabul hospitals—to bring cheer, love, joy and compassion to burn victims, people whose limbs were amputated, traumatized kids, etc... There was a 6-year-old child with third-degree burn injuries screaming her head off but momentarily forgetting her pain when a doctor in a clown suit started playing the violin for her. The docu he showed was so moving, many in the audience (of thousands) were weeping.

* * *

PATCH Adams is a fierce political and social activist who calls George Bush not only the most dangerous man in the world today but also the stupidest!

He hits the medical and pharmaceutical sectors hard. And also the big power brokers of the world. One of the telling things he told doctors were: "You study diseases that you will probably never encounter and yet the word compassion is never ever mentioned in med school...Prescribe to your patients poetry, love for the environment, friendship, love..."

Nakakabuhay siya (He is enlivening). And he exudes genuine hope, happiness and a real "just-do it" attitude. Burn out? One doctor asked him how he deals with it. He said that he had made a vow long ago to not ever have a bad day in his life. He claims to be "hopelessly, irritatingly happy."

He says that even when he is moved to tears in a Palestinian hospital or anywhere else when he sees suffering, his tears are signs of happiness. "We lose our capacity to be happy when we cannot cry anymore."

I write all this just to share (the experience) with all of you. What an extraordinary attitude (this man has). He is changing the world through a paradigm so crazy, it works! Maybe the world is really changing with people like Patch Adams and the millions who won't let George Bush have his war. I remember a phrase from "A Course in Miracles" which goes: "Mankind will be awed not at the destruction of the world but by its transformation!"

* * *

FOR those interested, here's the schedule of Fr. Joey Faller, who works out of both the Lucban Healing Center, which is still undergoing construction, and in churches around Metro Manila and Quezon.

On Mondays, Father Joey can be found at the Lucban Healing Center with healing Masses from 9 a.m.-12 noon; pray-overs from 2-6 p.m. Tuesdays, Father Joey is at the Lucban Healing Center the whole day.

Wednesdays, Father Joey can be found at his office at the Pius XII Catholic Center from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. On First Wednesdays, he celebrates the 8:30 a.m. Mass at SM Makati. Thursday, whole day at the Pius XII Office. On Fridays, he can be found at the Pius Center from 9 a.m.-12 noon.

On every second Friday, he says Mass in Sariaya, Quezon, at 7 p.m. On fourth Fridays, he says the 5:30 p.m. Mass at the Binondo Church. Every first Saturday, he says Mass at 12:15 p.m. at SM Megamall, every third Saturday at 7 p.m. at the Buklod Healing Center (97 Balete Ext. Drive), and every last Saturday of the month at 7:15 p.m. at St. Ferdinand Church, Lucena City.

He is the celebrant of the televised Mass every first Sunday at 8 a.m. over NBN Channel 4, after which he moves to the Lord's Flock on D. Tuazon cor. Quezon Avenue at 2 p.m.

A moment to remember

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

DESPITE Manolo Quezon's cynical observation that conservationist have a clean record unblemished by triumphs (you must give them A for effort anyway), the fund raiser of the Museum Foundation at the courtyard of the National Museum Anthropology building was a moment to relish and cherish. Aside from that I'm sure it was a huge success financially.

Some faces were sorely missed, like Purita Kalaw-Ledesma who welcomed (what seems like several eons ago) a group of us into her house to organize and push for a permanent home for the National Museum. For years the museum had been shunted from one building to another, its collection in boxes warehoused on borrowed premises.

We decided at the time to call ourselves "Concerned Citizens for the National Museum" when every other NGO that was being formed had the word "concerned" somewhere in its name. Several years later someone finally said "Enough *na*" with all these concerned this and concerned that. Today it's the Museum Foundation, and Maribel Ongpin is the president and instigator of the fund raiser.

The evening was conceived as a tribute to former President Fidel Ramos who, according to Amando Doronila, had the foresight to assign the three landmark buildings (the Senate, the Finance Building and the Tourism Building) as a museum complex. The idea being that together with Intramuros, the Post Office Building and the Metropolitan Theater stretching all the way to the boulevard and the Cultural Center, the configuration would form the art and cultural center of the city.

That was nearly 10 years ago. If it's still only a dream, well, you know how things move around here.

We've gotten as far as the restoration and conversion of the Finance Building into the Anthropology Museum, with the treasures of the galleon San Diego as the jewel in the crown, thanks to the group of Ramon del Rosario and Mike Luz. The Senate Building will be the National Gallery of Art, courtesy of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts and its then chair, Dr. Jaime Laya. Finally, the painting collection of Bangko Sentral and the Intramuros Administration will be joined to that of the National Museum's. (This is all rather like extracting teeth or perhaps more accurately strengthening them, but I suppose eventually one sees some results.)

Now it's only the Museum of Natural History that's waiting for the Department of Tourism to find another home. Former Secretaries Mina Gabor and Gemma Araneta both wanted to restore the Jai-Alai Building and transfer there but as usual there was no budget for the move, etc, etc. We all know what happened next. An idiot got in the way, or should I say several idiots?

In the meantime, here was an evening of familiar faces, with Doro remembering that Sen. Neptali Gonzales had threatened Chita Gatbonton and me that the Senate (we were trying to remove them from the Legislative Building) had the power to cut the budget of the National Museum to zero if we didn't shut up. Never having been threatened in my life, I was properly awed and couldn't believe I had heard right.

Then it came time for the honored guest to speak. So there was ex-President Ramos reminiscing about the Tobacco Tower and how we had complained about the height of that structure when right in the boulevard there was a 50-story-plus monolith of a condominium. (Let me digress and restate that before that building could be constructed, City Hall allowed the demolition of an Andres Luna San Pedro house, a landmark in a city that doesn't have all of that many landmarks left. But then demolition seems to be their hallmark and will probably be their legacy.)

Tata Poblador and I had a good laugh at ourselves, recalling that when we started out trying to get the Angara bill signed into law her son was a little boy and here he was now, this towering creature, looking like a man of the world! We did miss Sen. Edgardo Angara, author of the bill creating the National Museum Complex, and Sen. Loren Legarda. There didn't seem to be any representative of the Senate present, nor of Malacañang, for that matter. Speaker Joe de Venecia was there with the dynamic Gina but no chairmen of any committee on culture. No one apparently took to hear the advice of foreign advisor David Rockefeller that an administration should pay attention to culture. (Yeah, yeah, yeah, so they've got other priorities.)

For our entertainment, there was the Executive Band and Ming Ramos performing jazz numbers. Former Secretaries Mina Gabor and Raffy Alunan ably aided by Maan Hontiveros did a credible Gene Kelly/Donald O'Connor/Debbie Reynolds song and dance number which wasn't "Singing in the Rain" though. They actually looked as though they were enjoying themselves, too.

The funds raised, I understand, will go toward training museum guides and toward a museum fund needed so that the agency can at least have a fighting chance against moneyed collectors and agents. There's no question that times are hard and getting harder and that people are busy surviving. But wouldn't it be grand if people could find refuge in their National Museum, if they could consider it a thing of pride, something to show off amid all this blight?

Caged

YOUNG BLOOD

Marian Pio Roda Ching

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHEN I was young, I was made to stay in my crib. I peed; I ate, I lived my life inside that wooden contraption of protection.

I learned to live with it since I was made to believe I needed to be in the crib and everything in my young life was in that crib! All my stuffed toys were there, my blue elephant teether, my cushioned orange mirror (my very first instrument of vanity). The problem was, the crib reeked of pee and whatever was in my diaper. It was a good thing that parents' noses were in perfect condition so they washed the linens and my pillows and changed by diapers very often, which wasn't such a good thing for them.

I knew nothing about prisoners or the term "behind bars" then, so being stuck inside the crib wasn't a big deal for me. In fact, I loved it since I didn't have to do any chores. I just did things and created. I created reasons for the joys and frustrations of my parents, who had a tough time figuring out which was which. I definitely loved my life.

When I started to walk, my parents gave me my first computer-cum-wheelchair: a walker. I felt uncomfortable using it at first since I had to sit on a flimsy cloth saddle, but I got used to it eventually. I started to have fun with the colored buttons that made funny, incomprehensible sounds. But I had one favorite: a beautiful, clear ball with small colored pellets which could be rotated. When it broke, I mourned the loss for a while.

Then I began to realize what the walker was for. I started to take tiny steps and in due time I learned to run. My parents were ecstatic.

That was the signal for them to teach me ABC and stuff. I quickly learned those things. After all, I was a bright child (and still am).

Three years later, they sent me to my first house of fear. I was told that it was called a school. "Hey, sport, this is your second home," someone told me. "Soon you will meet your second parents. See those kids? They will be your new friends."

The thought of having second parents freaked me out. I didn't want second parents; I happened to like my first parents. And a second home? Who would like to call that big chunk of stone a home? I cried for a while but my mom managed to make me stop by bribing me with a lollipop.

My parents brought me to an air-conditioned office that smelled of lemon and left me alone with a woman I was told to address as "Ma'am." She asked me about colors and animals and other easy stuff. She asked me who I was, where I lived, who were my mom and dad. She kept writing on a red card and I absolutely hated it. If she was talking to me, why wasn't she looking at me?

After about an hour, mommy came and kissed me. She told ma'am we would come back after a week and thanked her.

A week later, we were back as mommy promised. I had passed the test and I would start going to school in June, she told me. I was terrified.

I went to school and somehow, I enjoyed it. Especially after I met Zach. He was a classmate and he helped me with school work.

Then I met people of different personalities, far different from who I was. They made going to school much easier.

I slowly made my way to the top of our class and reaped a lot of awards. I learned to love school but still I hated the assignments, seat work and quizzes.

I also hated the iron grills on the windows of our school. They made me feel like a prisoner.

I was also afraid of finding myself locked inside the toilet, especially because a ghost named Pedro was said to hang around our building. Still, I had to do it. Otherwise other people would have a good view of a girl doing her business.

After 13 years of going to the same school, I went to college. Sadly, there were grills there too and cubicles that had to be locked. I hated those loopy grills and flimsy locks. They made me feel claustrophobic.

I finished my course and went on to find a really fine job with a five-digit salary that soon became a six-digit one. I worked in this huge office but I always had to keep my door closed so as not to let the cold air from my air-con out. I was again a prisoner.

With everything going well, I soon had three nice cars: a Pajero, a Jaguar X-type and a Camry. I was real happy with them until the seatbelt law was implemented. I hated seatbelts; they prevented me from moving. But I had to wear them, for safety reasons.

When I went home to my new house, I enjoyed staying in my room. By 10 in the evening, I had to lock my doors and windows, again for safety reasons. I kept my jewelry and important documents in different boxes with locks.

I was enjoying life with my husband and two kids. Craley was in the crib most of the time while Maud went to school. I never thought of asking them how they felt about being kept in the crib.

I was driving to my office when I crashed into a ten-wheeler. It was my first vehicular accident—and my last. I was in a coma and I was kept in this bed with plastic curtains around it. I was stuck there for five years. My husband paid a fortune, refusing to give up hope that I would recover. They jammed tubes down my throat, inserted needles in my wrists and posterior and I had electrodes all over my head.

I died after driving my family close to bankruptcy. Since they couldn't explain how I died after suffering a small cut, they kept me in a refrigerator that had the heavenly scent of formalin. I was considered a medical mystery but I felt like a prisoner in a steel box and that definitely wasn't "cool."

Finally, I was transferred to a coffin with orange and pink frills. It was okay to have a coffin that was retro-like but I wanted to get back at my husband for putting me in a closed coffin. The glass over my head wasn't even clean! I watched as my relatives cried over me. But they probably didn't have any idea of the difficulty I was going through. First, the coffin was too narrow. Second, it had no cooling system; had I been alive, I would have died quickly from dehydration. Third, my make-up was too chick! (I spooked the beautician they hired for about two months.) Finally, I was again locked-up.

Days later, I was six feet underground. An angel came to me and led me to heaven. I was so happy, anticipating the joy of being free at last. I was free from cribs and metal grills, seatbelts and air-conditioned rooms and everything that was locked up for safety and security reasons.

Or so I thought—until I saw the Pearly Gates with the huge golden chain and the giant lock. I wanted to go back to earth.

Marrian Pio Roda Ching, 15, is a 3rd-year high school student at Colegio San Agustin—Biñan.

Coconut farmers want their P700 million now

MA. CLARA Lobregat and the Coconut Federation leadership are at it again. Their attempt to stop the release of P700 million to the coconut farmers reveals their true intention. Worse, they are falsely representing small coconut farmers. In reality, small coconut farmers do not oppose the release of the funds. It is only Lobregat, through the Cocofed, who stubbornly insists on blocking its release.

We question the veracity of their claim that one million farmers support delaying the release of the funds. We challenge her to produce the list of farmers who support her initiative and prove that she indeed represents the interests of small coconut farmers and farm workers.

Perhaps she has the wrong idea about the composition of her so-called supporters. The farmers she refers to are big landowners who dominate Cocofed. Lobregat herself is a big landowner. In fact, we are still wondering why her big coconut landholdings have not yet been subjected to agrarian reform.

The petition filed by Lobregat and Cocofed is utterly ridiculous. Not a single small coconut farmer would think of opposing the disbursement of the funds since it is going to be used for their benefit. The funds will be used primarily for programs and projects for the uplift of small coconut farmers and workers. Given the high incidence of poverty in the rural areas, P700 million will go a long way in helping small farmers.

The claim that the disbursement of the funds is tantamount to diversion of the earnings and assets of the UCPB is ludicrous. What is illegal and fraudulent is using public funds for private interests, which is exactly the essence of Civil Case 0033 filed against Lobregat, Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., et. al. The case is being heard at the Sandiganbayan.

If we were to follow the logic of Lobregat, then Cocofed should be the first to be charged with malfeasance because the funds used for the insurance plan that benefited so-called Cocofed beneficiaries were derived from the coco levy funds!

—OMI ROYANDOYAN, executive director, Philippine Peasant Insitute, Rm. 319 PSSC Bldg., Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, Quezon City

Lawyers did their part for 'Abadilla 5'

LETTERS

LAST Dec. 10, Human Rights Day, the INQUIRER started running a series on the "Abadilla 5," the death convicts and torture victims for the ambush-killing of former Col. Rolando N. Abadilla on June 13, 1996 Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City. One article said, "The original defense lawyers...abandoned the so-called Abadilla 5 after their conviction."

This is not accurate. What happened was that after their conviction by Judge Jaime N. Salazar Jr., I as counsel for Lenido Lumanog filed in March 2000 a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court questioning certain orders of the judge denying several motions for the presentation of new and additional evidence on the Alex Boncayao Brigade (ABB) angle of true responsibility for the Abadilla murder, including an independent motion from UP chaplain Fr. Roberto P. Reyes. Lumanog was also joined in this petition by three of the four other death convicts: Augusto Santos, SPO2 Cesar Fortuna and Rameses de Jesus.

The petition was dismissed by the Supreme Court in September 2001, so the Abadilla murder case became subject to mandatory automatic review starting February 2002.

In the current automatic review, the original defense lawyers have been asked to represent their respective clients. The following defense lawyers have entered their appearance for their respective clients: Dante S. David for Joel de Jesus; Leandro C. Azarcon, with whom I am collaborating, for Augusto Santos; Grenalyn Virtucio (in place of Nestor Ifurung who has withdrawn) for Rameses de Jesus; Patricia F. Foria and Arlene Lapuz Ureta (in place of Reynaldo L. Bagatsing who has withdrawn for SPO2 Cesar Fortuna; and the undersigned for Lenido Lumanog.

These are also basically the same lawyers for the Abadilla 5 in the newly reopened preliminary investigation being conducted by the Department of Justice of their complaints of torture and other human rights violations. In addition, the complainants are also represented by FLAG lawyer Edgardo R. Abaya, with whom I am collaborating, and by the Commission on Human Rights which has its own lawyers.

So all the defense lawyers have done their part at different stages of the murder and torture cases for the "Abadilla 5."

—SOLIMAN M. SANTOS JR., 18 Mariposa St., Cubao, Quezon City

THE CHALLENGE ON THE 17th ANNIVERSARY OF EDSA I

Seventeen years ago EDSA I happened to the Filipino people. People Power threw out a dictator without bloodshed and the whole world cheered. The democratic institutions were restored after fourteen years of repression, oppression and injustice and living under an illegitimate regime. A conjugal dictatorship aided by a subservient cabinet and marked by a failing economy and unprecedented corruption that became known as the world's kleptocracy was ended. We believed that the poverty and misery of the Filipino poor would also find resolution and government would start serving the welfare of the majority. In fact many Filipinos living abroad came back with renewed inspiration and hope that we would bounce back to become a renewed nation with great promise of peace and prosperity.

Today seventeen years after, we the Filipino people, realize that the ills causing EDSA I never really left us. Despite an EDSA II in between that promised to end corruption, immorality and incompetence in government, the cancer in our society has worsened and we are at the brink of decay and disintegration as a nation and as a people even as hordes of Filipinos leave our country daily in despair and bitterness. We are burdened with an illegitimate regime whose continuity is buttressed by the military and greatly aided by the control of media through fear or favor. Our democratic institutions have ceased to serve the interest of the majority, they only perpetuate the interests of the economic-political elite. Our government is headed by a conjugal partnership, Gloria and Mike Arroyo, who instead of answering the grave charges of corruption against both of them, have swept these under the rug by the mere announcement that Mrs. Arroyo will not run in 2004 while backdoor efforts to extend her term up to 2007 are being quietly maneuvered with the complicity of Congress. And for this reason the impeachment charges we filed against Gloria Arroyo was blocked by the House of Representatives.

Today the national debt is almost three trillion pesos because under an economist chief executive and DOF Jose Isidro Camacho, we have become a borrowing economy. Gambling, drugs, corruption and smuggling are thriving under the First Couple with PAGCOR chairman Ephraim Genuino, his Bigkis boys in fund rich government agencies and the Malacanang based PNP. The "flesh trade" is flourishing because DOLE Patricia Sto. Tomas, backed by her boss and their tentacles masquerading as protectors of entertainers turned "Japayukis" are blocking reforms at TESDA that threaten to slash their P16B+ a year under the table profit. Our sovereignty is in tatters and we risk being blown up in an unauthorized war because the commander in chief and DND Angelo Reyes have sold us for thirty pieces of silver. The tale on our immorality and corruption is endless. We borrow but do not produce honorably, our profit comes from crime, exploiting our vices and selling our young women; foreigners lord it over our shores and trample on the rights of our aggrieved brothers. What have we come to? Why have we gone so low? We have become shameless and immoral, dishonorable and degenerate. Should we not rise up in honor and courage, to overcome those who block our decency and dignity, so we can restore our virtues and our morals? Should we not fight for our birthright, for our dominion on the only land we can call our own?

Seventeen years after EDSA I, we are at the brink of another EDSA. Or perhaps, by the collective indifference of many or the smug arrogance of those in power, the cancer festering our society can no longer be excised by just another EDSA. In the history of our social upheavals the interests of the elite have always prevailed. In the name of reform this same interest is being peddled now. But the time for genuine transformation that will bring peace and prosperity, justice and freedom to all Filipinos, not just a few, is now. Unless we want our country to blow up in bloody chaos. Time is running out and we have to decide now, on this 17th anniversary of EDSA I.

PCA - KOALISYON
February 25, 2003

ADVT.

Moro-American War

PADANG Karbala. Bud Dajo. Bud Bagsak.

I have to admit that until last weekend those names didn't make any sense to me. Then I read an article in Hong Kong's South China Morning Post in which Habib Hashim of the Jolo-based Islamic Command Council warned against US troops entering Sulu because people there still "recalled with pain the Battle of Bud Dajo."

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

It was a warning to be echoed by Sulu Rep. Hussein Amin and Governor Parouk Hussin of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao in interviews with the INQUIRER published yesterday, accompanied by the headline: "Death awaits GIs, Moro leaders warn."

I had to do some quick research to find out what this Battle of Bud Dajo was all about, and, in the process, realized how little we know of what should be called the Moro-American War, which erupted when the Americans first occupied the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century.

The Moro-American War is separate from the Filipino-American War. The latter was the struggle of Filipinos to maintain independence declared in 1898, following 300 years of Spanish rule. The Moro-American War, on the other hand, was one where the Americans tried to conquer the Moros of Mindanao, who had never come under Spanish control.

One of the fiercest battles in the Moro-American War was that of Padang Karbala in what is now the town of Bayang in Lanao del Sur. In May 1902, the US deployed 478 soldiers to wrest control of the town from Sultan Pandapatan.

Last year was the centennial of that battle, but I do not remember any coverage in the mass media except for an "I-witness" documentary produced by Howie Severino. Fortunately, I was able to retrieve a copy of that documentary, which provided valuable information, including interviews with an old imam (religious leader) who was a child at the time of the battle. The imam showed the cameras horseshoes used by the US infantry and described how the Americans towered over them as they rode their huge horses.

The people in Bayang remember, and say the battle was fought in defense not only of their town but also of Islam. Their fight was fierce, their town fortified by an intricate system of moats and trenches, but they had little by way of arms. Some 400 Maranao lost their lives.

American historical accounts say that the Moros in Bayang surrendered, raising white flags. They were not aware that Moros put up white flags to mourn their dead.

The survivors named the battleground "Padang Karbala" (Mt. Karbala) after a place in Iraq where Imam Hussain and 72 companions were martyred a thousand years earlier as they opposed the heretic Caliph Yazid. History repeats itself, over and over again.

The battle of Bud Dajo (also sometimes spelled Bud Dahu, "Bud" referring to a mountain) took place in March 1906 in Jolo. Gen. Leonard Wood ordered his troops to "kill or capture those savages," sending in 790 soldiers and the gunboat Pampanga to subdue the Moros in the area. The Moros took refuge in the crater of Mount Dajo. About 600 of them died in that battle, including women and children. It is the deaths in this battle that the Moros of Sulu now talk about avenging.

But Sulu saw an even bloodier encounter in the Moro-American War. About a thousand Tausugs had settled in the crater of Bud Bagsak, defying the American occupation as well as oppressive sultans and datus. In June 1913, Leonard Wood ordered Gen. John "Blackjack" Pershing to attack. Pershing, we are told, had a new .45-caliber pistol, just invented and ready for testing. The Tausug mainly had knives and bolos. Later, Wood wrote that "the Moro women wore trousers and were dressed and armed like the men and charged with them."

Some 2,000 Moros may have died in that battle, including 196 women and 340 children. The Bud Bagsak encounter was labeled a "frightful atrocity" by one American newspaper and the writer Mark Twain offers the following reflections on a photograph of the massacre: "We see a picture. We see small forms. We see the terrified faces. We see the tears. We see small hands clinging in supplication to the mothers. . ."

The Moros remember. Some of the information I gathered for today's article comes from the website "bangsamoro.org," which combines excellent archival research with thoughtful commentaries. Beneath its website name, there is a reminder for all of us, Moro or not: A nation that has no past has no future.

The planned deployment of American combat troops will revive memories of the Moro-American War, bringing them into sharper focus. Even as Philippine government officials were denying that the Americans were sending combat troops to Mindanao, last Friday's New York Times had very specific figures about the deployment: 750 ground troops and another 1,000 marines with Cobra attack helicopters and Harrier AV-8B attack planes to be stationed offshore on two ships.

When the facts are in, when we realize the Moro-American War never really ended, we have to reflect and ask: Just who started, and just who is spreading global terrorism?

AGENTS OF THE YEAR

Winner (1)
Rosemarie L. Pabalan
Chestnut NBO

1st Runner-up (2)
Rebecca Ann K. Sy
Cypress NBO

2nd Runner-up (3)
Beatrice L. Uy
Cypress NBO

❶

❷

❸

CUP WINNERS

(1) *President's Cup Winner*
Visitacion Lilia C. Chang
Osmanthus NBO

(2) *Sales Manager's Cup Winner*
Lorenza D. Huang
Birch NBO

(3) *General Manager's Cup Winner*
Christine Chan-Lee
Redwood NBO

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Marie G. Choy
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LEVEL 3

Rosemarie L. Pabalan
Chestnut NBO

Beatrice L. Uy
Cypress NBO

Letty L. Lacson
Cedar NBO

President's Cup Runners-up

Mary T. Chan
Redwood NBO

Fredezwinda T. Gonzales
Tindalo NBO

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

WORLDBRIEFS

China quake kills 242

BEIJING—A powerful earthquake struck China's remote western Xinjiang region on Monday, killing at least 242 people, injuring more than 1,000 and flattening houses and schools, officials and state media said. Reporting the death toll, the official Xinhua News Agency described the quake as "the most serious since 1949," when China's communist government was founded. *AP*

Top officials die in crash

KARACHI—A small aircraft carrying Afghanistan's minister of industry and a Chinese mining executive crashed off southern Pakistan, killing all eight people aboard, officials said. Wreckage from the Cessna 402, which crashed shortly after takeoff, was found in the Arabian Sea. Among the eight dead was Afghanistan's Industries Minister, Juma Mohammed Mohammedi, and Sun Changshen, the Pakistan representative of the China Metallurgical Construction Co. *AP*

Apology to Korean people

SEOUL—South Korean President Kim Dae-jung closed the door on four decades in South Korean politics on Monday with an apology to the Korean people and a defiant defense of his controversial "sunshine" policy of engagement with Stalinist North Korea. After chairing his final Cabinet meeting, the president, who survived death sentences, assassination attempts and years of jail and exile in his long political career, left the presidential Blue House without ceremony in a motorcade taking him to his new home in western Seoul. Kim, a frail but alert 77-year-old, stepped into retirement a discredited figure whose greatest achievement—bringing North Korea to the negotiating table—was among his most controversial. *AFP*

Serbian leader surrenders

BEDE, Serbia-Montenegro—Serbian ultranationalist leader Vojislav Seselj, charged by the UN war crimes court with atrocities allegedly committed by his paramilitary troops during the wars in Croatia and Bosnia, flew to the Netherlands Monday to surrender to the tribunal. Seselj, an ally of former President Slobodan Milosevic who is already on trial for war crimes at The Hague, said he was surrendering "in order to destroy the evil tribunal, an American instrument against the Serbs." *AP*

AIDS vaccine for Asians, blacks

WASHINGTON—The first AIDS vaccine to be tested in people does not offer much protection to the general population but may protect blacks and Asians, vaccine-maker VaxGen Inc. said on Monday. Long-awaited results from the VaxGen's trial of AIDSVAX show the vaccine only reduced the rate of HIV infection by 3.8 percent in 5,400 men and women considered at high risk. But when the figures were analyzed closely. they showed that Asians and blacks who got the vaccine had a 67 percent lower rate of infection that those who got a placebo shot. *Reuters*

Battered husbands

BEIJING—More and more husbands in urban China are seeking shelter and legal aid from verbal and physical abuse inflicted on them by their wives, a report said Monday. Some male victims of domestic violence have called for the establishment of a men's equivalent of the All-China Women's Federation, a quasi-government organization that addresses women's interests and welfare, the China Daily said. The men also want better access to legal aid so they can get justice in courts. *AFP*

World unites in warning Iraq of March 1 deadline

BAGHDAD—The world united behind demands that Iraq begin destroying its al-Samoud 2 missiles by a March 1 deadline or face UN Security Council action that could finally trigger war.

Iraq's weapons monitoring chief Gen. Husam Mohammad Amin refused to answer direct questions on Sunday on whether Baghdad would destroy the missiles but said Baghdad was giving serious consideration to the UN demand issued on Friday.

The warning to Iraq rang out across the world—from the United States, which already has tens of thousands of troops and hundreds of warplanes and warships in the Gulf region, to France, a leading opponent of a rush to war.

"We are reaching that point where serious consequences must flow," said US Secretary of State Colin Powell, using Washington's language for war. Powell, a driving force behind a new US and British resolution on Iraq to be presented to the Security Council as early as Monday, said it was clear Baghdad had breached UN demands to come clean over any weapons of mass destruction.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan threw his weight behind the order for Iraq to destroy the missiles and said the Security Council would have to take up the issue if Baghdad refused.

"They have to destroy these weapons . . . I am confident they will destroy the weapons. If they refuse to destroy them, the Council will have to take a decision on that," Annan told reporters in Ankara.

France, a veto-wielding member of the Security Council, joined the warnings to Iraq. Paris has been holding out for UN inspections to be given as much time as possible if Baghdad cooperates.

"It is necessary for Iraq to act and meet its obligations, in this case the destruction of these prohibited missiles," French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin told Le Figaro newspaper.

French government spokesperson Jean-Francois Cope told Europe No 1 radio: "France does not show any kind of particular leniency with regard to Iraq. There is no question of that."

In its first comment since chief UN arms inspector Hans Blix set the March 1 deadline on Friday, Iraq said it hoped to settle the missiles issue through "cooperation and agreement."

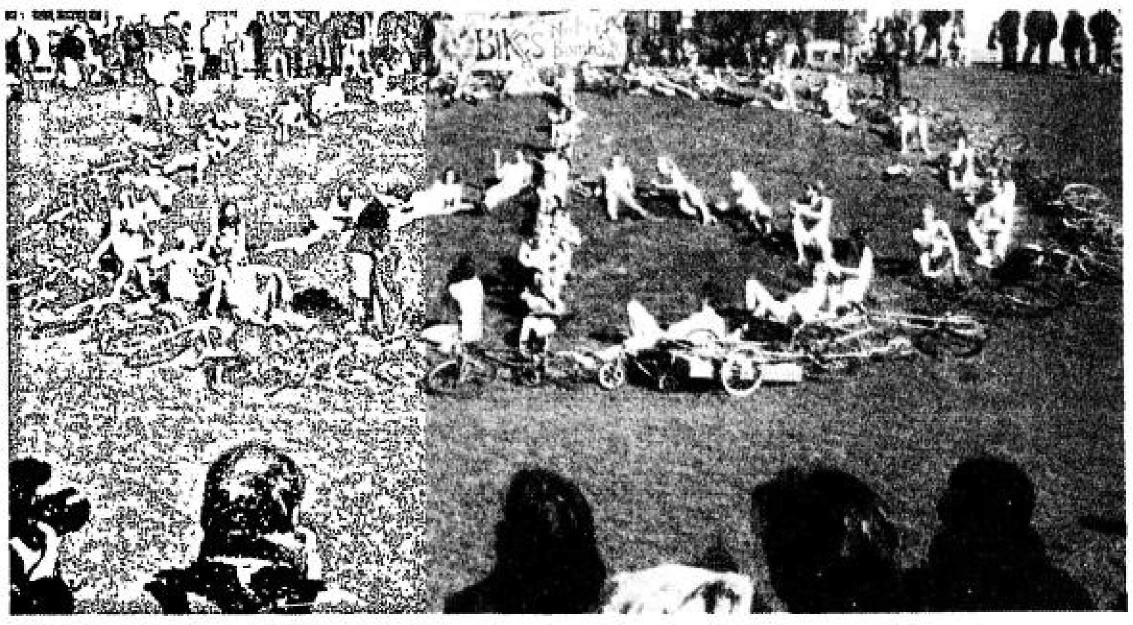
"We are studying (Blix's letter) in depth and in a serious and comprehensive way," Amin told reporters in Baghdad.

Iraq test-fired a rocket engine at the Falluja site, some 70 km west of Baghdad, in an attempt to show UN inspectors the al-Samoud 2 missile could not violate a 1991 range limit set by the United Nations. Baghdad says it was designed to stay within the permitted 150-km range.

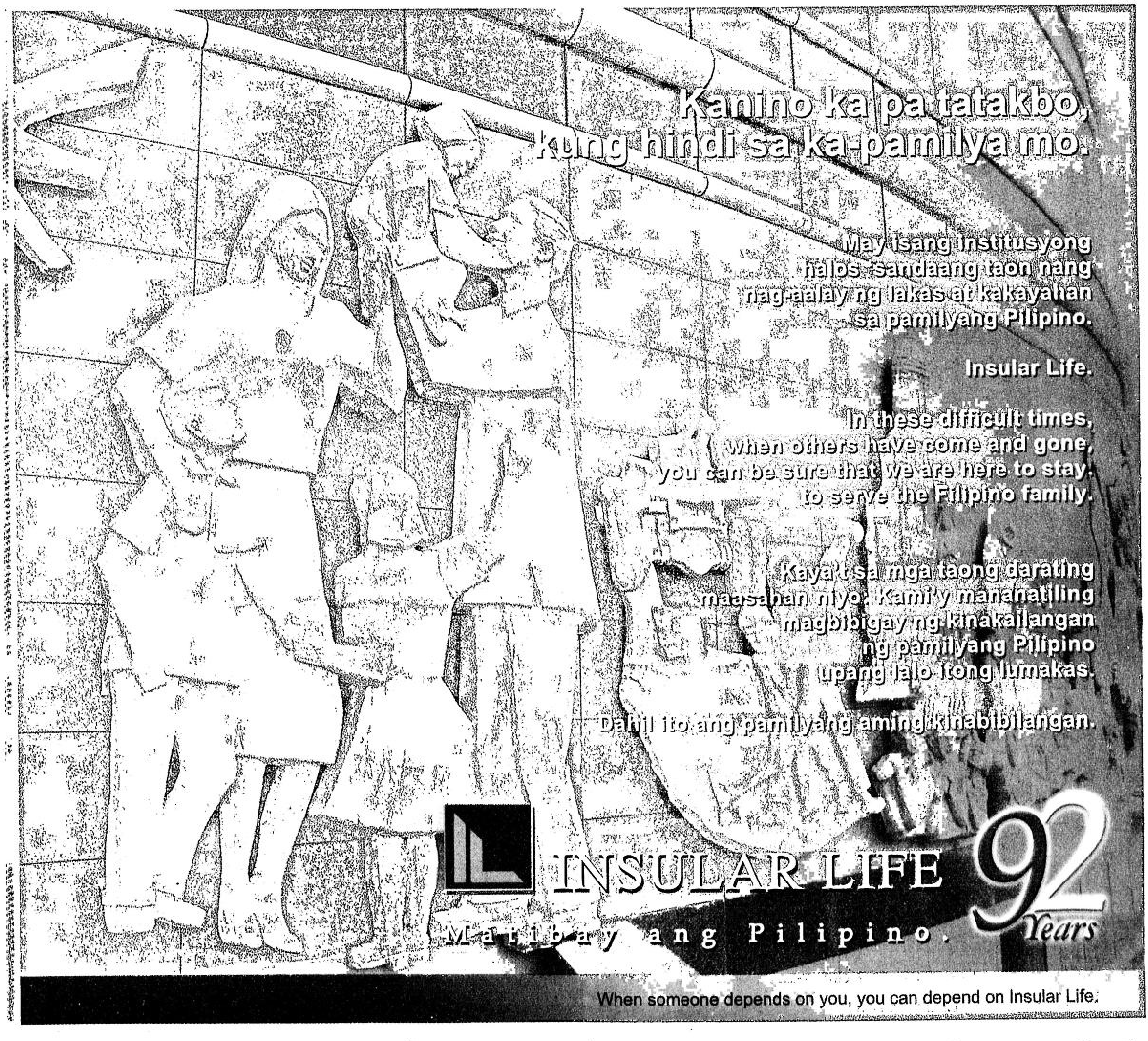
With Iraq facing the possibility of a US-led attack, Amin said destroying the missiles would affect his country's defense capabilities but "would not completely terminate them."

Earlier on Sunday, Powell had dropped heavy hints about Washington's timetable for war as he went on a diplomatic swing through Japan and China to drum up support.

The United Nations should take vital decisions soon after an inspectors' report expected on March 7, he said. *Reuters*



A GROUP of bicycle enthusiasts stage a naked protest against war by making a peace symbol with their bikes and their bodies at Sunset Beach in Vancouver on Feb. 23. AP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Vietnam holds showpiece trial of mafia boss

HO CHI MINH CITY—With a penchant for beautiful women and gambling, Ho Chi Minh City godfather Nam Cam, once considered among the most powerful figures in Vietnam, is now on trial for his life.

The 55-year-old mafia boss will appear in the dock of the People's Court on Tuesday in the bustling southern business capital, the center of his underworld gambling empire that flourished for over a decade.

A veteran of the defunct South Vietnamese Army and a former dock worker, Nam Cam, more formally known as Truong Van Cam, faces seven charges ranging from murder, bribery to gambling. He is almost certain to face the firing squad after the 55-day court proceedings.

It will be an ignoble end for the father of eight children and a man who allegedly had high Communist Party members and an unhealthy number of Ho Chi Minh City's top police officers on his payroll.

Twenty-one state officials, including two expelled members of the party's powerful Central Committee, 13 senior police officers and three former prosecutors, will also appear in the dock beside him.

Among the more sensational accounts was Nam Cam's alleged assassination of rival gang boss Dung Ha, a reputed lesbian from the northeastern port city of Haiphong. After serving a spell in prison, Dung Ha moved south to Ho Chi Minh City where she joined up with Nam Cam.

However, she reportedly tried to carve out her own territory, prompting a bitter fallout between the pair.

Determined to embarrass him, she arranged for a gift box containing rats to be delivered to one of Nam Cam's restaurants in the city. Humiliated, Nam Cam allegedly ordered her killing. Dung Ha was found dead on Oct. 2, 2000 with a shot to her head.

"Vietnam is not as violent as the United States, but Dung Ha's murder made us think we were living in a Hollywood movie," said Vu, a 60-year-old motorbike taxi driver.

Born to an impoverished family in the former Saigon in April 1947, Nam Cam ran into trouble with the law at the age of 15 when he was arrested for stabbing a man to death in a fight, according to his police file. He was released after spending more than two years in detention and jail, and in 1966 he joined the South Vietnamese Army.

After reunification of the divided country under the communist North, Nam Cam was arrested three times between 1978 and 1982 on gambling charges. He subsequently rose through the underworld ranks over the next decade to become a feared mafia boss.

Some observers say Dung Ha's murder and the inevitable tit-for-tat killings triggered alarm bells among the top echelons of the party about the threat organized crime could have on political stability.

AFP

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Organized war on 'jueteng' urged

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz called on "people of good will" to join the national movement Jueteng Free Philippines to stop the "jueteng plague (which) goes on openly" in the country.

In a statement, Cruz, immediate past president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said organized jueteng could only be banished by an equally organized anti-jueteng crusade.

He said the Jueteng Free Philippines, which Cruz chairs, has a national board inspired by thousands of anti-jueteng advocates. The group was launched in this city last year.

Cruz said the group needs "people of good will (who will) work with all anti-jueteng personalities in the government, in the non-government organizations and the churches."

He said that if the national government honestly wanted to fight corruption, "there is jueteng staring at its face."

In Nueva Vizcaya, the distinction of the province as the only jueteng-free area in Northern Luzon was tainted following reports that jueteng had resurfaced.

Reports reaching the INQUIRER indicated that jueteng had started to operate in the towns of Solano, Bagabag and Bayombong, with winning numbers drawn twice daily.

On Friday, *cobradores* (bet collectors) were seen roaming the streets of downtown Solano, carrying folded sheets of yellow paper and taking bets from residents.

The bet collectors claimed that winning numbers were being drawn at a safehouse near the Nueva Vizcaya-Isabela border.

Nueva Vizcaya Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani said he was angered by the reports.

"I received a lot of calls telling me that jueteng had started to operate again, so I immediately called up (Senior Supt. Jesus Manubay, provincial police director) to ask him about this," he said.

He said Manubay told him he would look into the matter.

In Baguio City, at least 22 suspected jueteng bet collectors were arrested in separate raids on suspected jueteng dens in the city last week.

Reports said police recovered P27,048 in bet money from the suspects.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina, in a recent visit to Baguio, said he would abide by his self-appointed deadline of May 6 to stop illegal gambling operations like jueteng or resign from the Cabinet.

Last year, Lina relieved seven police officials from their posts for their inability to curb jueteng.

Since December 2002, however, police yearend reports on the jueteng crackdown had been lackluster. In the Cordillera, only 390 suspects in illegal gambling operations were arrested. No one was convicted. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes and Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Union fears job loss for Napocor veterans

BAGUIO CITY—A mad rush for positions at the new National Transmission Corp. (Transco) has been easing out former employees of the National Power Corp. who have been assured of these jobs, a Napocor union official said.

"Taking on influential Transco positions are people backed by Malacañang at the expense of veteran engineers, industry experts and Napocor's former labor force, who will officially be terminated on Feb. 28 along with the old Napocor," said Abner Eleria, Napocor Employees Consolidated Union (Necu) national president.

Napocor is rehiring the retrenched employees to form the new Transco and a downsized Napocor.

The agenda, a Transco source said, appeared to be an overhaul of Transco's original work pool, which ran Transco when it was a subsidiary division of the state-owned firm,

Transco had been spun off into a new firm, and was scheduled for auction this year under the privatization scheme of the 2001 Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira).

"Apparently, whoever Malacañang plans to sell Transco to does not want the veterans and their old union to be part of the sale," Eleria said.

The Necu and the Napocor Employees and Workers Union (Newu) fought the Omnibus Electric Industry Reform bill in Congress, and had been critical of Malacañang's policy on power cost reduction.

"We have been complaining about two (top management positions in Transco) being given to people who were not qualified, but who ingratiated themselves with the Palace. But no one is listening to us," Eleria said.

Alan Ortiz, Transco president, told employees of the Napocor North Luzon office here on Feb. 13 that Transco would operate as a new company.

"There are no new employees . .. so we believe, and we have checked with the Civil Service Commission, that the unions have no legitimate reason to be part of the (Transco) selection board," said Alex Cortes, Transco vice president for human resources. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Villagers assail plan to bring plant to them

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

PANDAN, Antique—After successfully fighting a project to dump Metro Manila's garbage in northern Antique, residents are now protesting a plan of the National Power Corp. (Napocor) to transfer a diesel-powered plant in a coastal village in this town.

In separate resolutions, residents of Pandan, 124 kilometers north of the capital town of San Jose, expressed fear that the 112-megawatt power plant will pose health risks and threaten the source of livelihood of the people of Barangay Patria.

Aside from residents of Patria, the councils of neighboring barangays Duyong, Luhod-Bayang and Tingib also passed resolutions opposing the plan.

In a letter to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the pastoral council of the parish of St. Francis Xavier, comprising seven barangays, also warned that the power generator could pollute the air, sea, rivers and soil as well as destroy organic life.

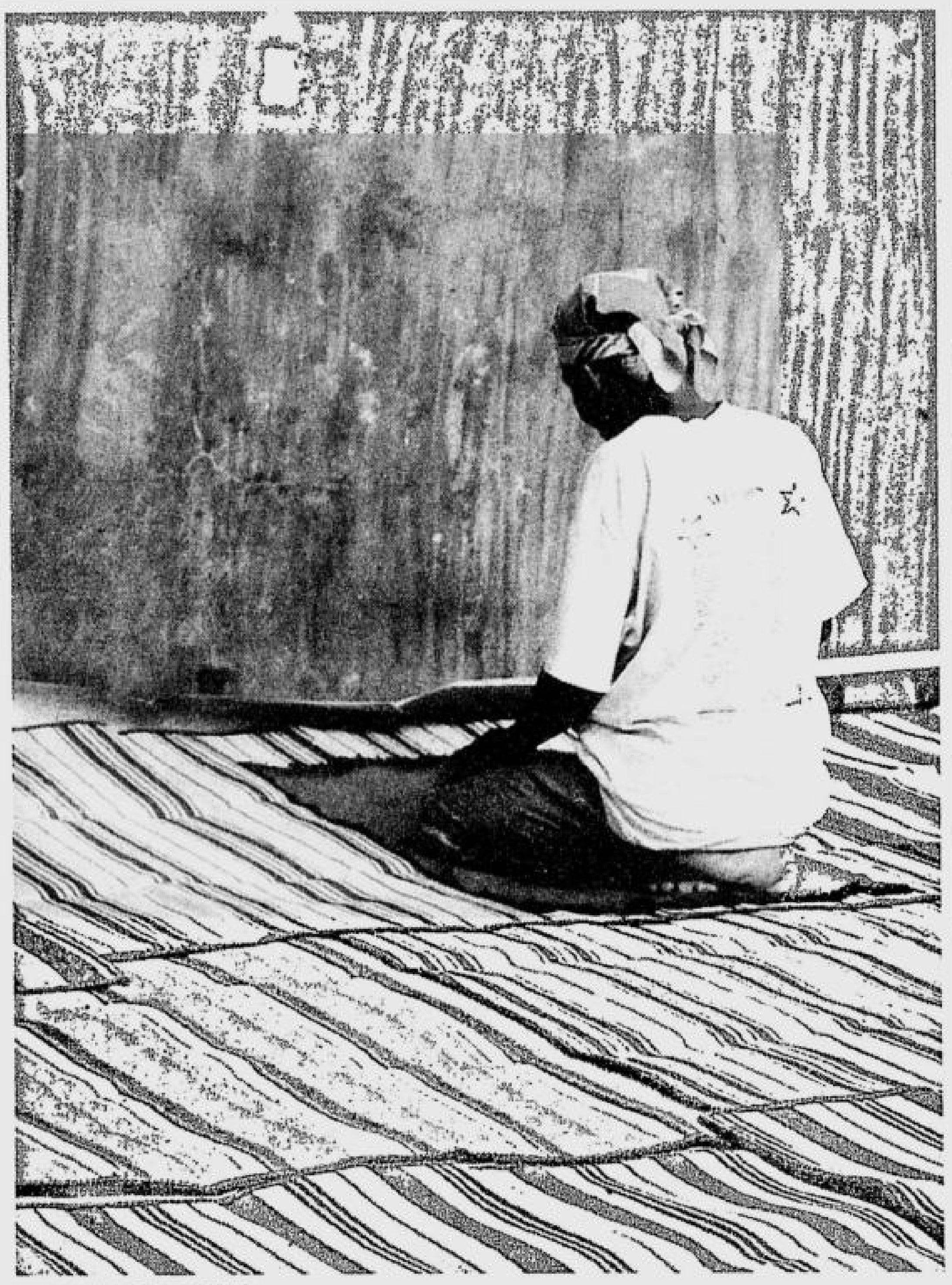
The proposed site is part of the 12,000-hectare area comprising the Northwestern Panay Peninsula in the provinces of Aklan and Antique, which President Macapagal-Arroyo declared as a protected area on April 25 last year. The site includes the towns of Nabas, Malay and Buruanga in Aklan and the municipalities of Libertad and Pandan in Antique.

The protected area, described as "one of the precious jewels of the country," is home to a variety of endangered species and the last of the relatively intact watershed in Panay, which is vital to efforts to protect a number of animal species that are endemic to the area.

In a letter dated Sept. 20, 2002 to Pandan Mayor Plaridel Sanchez VI, Marquito Fernandez, manager of the Napocor engineering resource services department, said the generator would help sustain the power supply of Panay Island and stabilize the supply of power in Northern Panay.

The generator, which will be transferred from Batangas, was acquired in 1992 from Enron under the build-operate-transfer (BOT) scheme. It is expected to operate in January 2005.

Cora Dureza, corporate communications officer of the Napocor in Panay, said the power generator is needed to fill the power supply gap in Panay expected in the next few years.



PRAYER AMID WAR

AP

Hasan Datua, 56, an evacuee, prays inside an evacuation center in strife-torn Pikit, North Cotabato amid the clashes going on between government soldiers and guerrillas of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Strike at gold mining firm in Benguet over but 1,300 workers keep off tunnels

BAGUIO CITY—The 20-day strike at the Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. (LCMC) in Mankayan, Benguet, may have ended, but at least 1,300 miners have refused to return to the firms' gold and copper mine tunnels, a company official said on Monday.

The miners, in an apparent bid to break away from the 1,526-member Lepanto Employees Union (LEU), voted on Sunday to stay away from the company's Mankayan compound until the firm reinstates 42 union leaders, said Flor Fajilan, LCMC human resources manager.

The vote was cast during a daylong indignation rally staged by LEU workers and members of the Kilusang Mayo Uno and the Cordillera Peoples Alliance at the LCMC mine site.

Fajilan said the 42 union leaders were terminated with 79 union members for staging the strike.

"But we have agreed to re-hire the 79 employees, only after they undergo a strict screening process to be handled by both the firm and the union," he said.

Panelo Ambas, LEU president, and leaders of the 160-member Lepanto Local Staff Union (Llosu), signed a memorandum of agreement with LCMC lawyers on Saturday that addressed seven key issues that triggered the Feb. 2 strike, said Glenn Batilando, Lepanto environment manager.

But Fajilan said this agreement failed to muster enough support for the reinstatement of the 42 union officials, who included Ambas and Llosu president Ernesto Dulag.

"Their reinstatement is holding up the implementation of the agreement," said Fajilan.

According to the Dinteg Alternative Law Center, which monitored Sunday's rally, 1,300 LEU union members "agreed to continue their strike until the LCMC management met their final demand for their leaders' reinstatement." *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

2 appointees cause confusion at gov't office

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The Philippine Information Agency in Eastern Visayas (PIA-8) has been rocked with what the employees described as a "leadership vacuum."

This came after the newly appointed regional manager, Alicia Nicart, 47, was asked to give way to another "appointee," Karen Tiopes, a day after Nicart received her appointment paper from PIA Director General Renato Velasco.

Nicart, who was PIA provincial manager in Eastern Samar for almost 10 years, was ordered to assume the position of PIA regional director by Special Order No. 36 issued by Velasco on Feb. 12.

The next day, Nicart took over the post from Alvin Arpon who held the position in an acting capacity for four years.

Arpon failed to get the nod of the selection committee because he did not have a masters degree, one of the requirements for the post.

But Nicart was surprised to receive a call from Eva Gonzales, said to be a staffer of Velasco, informing her that her appointment had been revoked.

Gonzales reportedly told Nicart that Tiopes would take over as PIA regional director on Mar. 1.

"I think, as a person, I deserve a courtesy. If my appointment was indeed recalled, they should have at least issued a written order recalling my appointment," she told the INQUIRER.

Nicart said she would let her decide what her next move would be.

In the meantime, she said she would continue to do her job until she was shown a copy of an order revoking her appointment as PIA regional director.

Tiopes, who is connected with the Leyte provincial tourism council, is the wife of George Tiopes, a point man of President Macapagal-Arroyo in Eastern Visayas.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Tiopes, both at their residence and office, on her side but she was not available.

But the PIA employees want Nicart to stay as their regional director.

In a one-page letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the employees said they believed that Nicart would be able to give the PIA regional office a "sense of direction and leadership so needed in these times when decisive actions are necessary."

"Nicart is an established figure in the PIA family and is widely respected in the media and among her peers," they said,

The employees also pointed out that Velasco's supposed order, appointing Tiopes to the post only resulted in a "leadership vacuum" at the PIA regional office.

Chocolate Hills project pushed

TAGBILARAN CITY—The Bohol provincial board's tourism committee has decried the slow pace of the renovation project being undertaken at the Chocolate Hills complex in Carmen town.

This was one of the concerns raised by board member Ester Corazon Galbreath, tourism committee chair, in a report she presented in Monday's session presided over by Vice Gov. Julius Caesar Herrera.

"The ongoing renovation project . . . was assessed to be very slow," Galbreath said.

Galbreath said her committee would have a major role in the project. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Speaker says Japan to fund dam's irrigation system

BINALONAN, Pangasinan—Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. said the Japanese government would provide the $200-million loan needed for the construction of the San Roque multipurpose dam project's (SRMDP) irrigation component.

De Venecia, who announced this on Saturday during this town's fiesta, said the Japanese government had assured him that it would release the loan this year "out of the respect of the Japanese people for President Macapagal-Arroyo."

Gov. Victor Agbayani said the Speaker's announcement "was a happy news to me and to the farmers who are awaiting for the establishment of the irrigation component."

"We were made to believe from the very start that the irrigation component, which will benefit 70,000 hectares of agricultural land, was a part of the SRMDP. (This is the reason) Pangasinan supported the project," Agbayani said.

The first phase of the irrigation project, renamed Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project, costs P6.9 billion and will involve the construction of a re-regulating pond and the rehabilitation of the main canals of the lower and upper Agno irrigation systems.

"These are vital structures that will absorb extreme water outflow during heavy rainfall and the operation of power turbines of the SRMDP," Agbayani said in a letter to former Japanese Ambassador Yoshihisa Ara.

Agbayani said the irrigation structures would ensure the efficient use of the dam's water when the SRMDP operates soon.

"Absence of the re-regulating pond (which absorbs water used for power generation) as major reservoir for water outflow continues to pose a flooding hazard and may damage smaller dams serving as essential water spillways downstream," he said.

He said he asked the National Irrigation Authority to prepare a "viable, attainable and cost efficient" irrigation project proposal.

"Originally, the proposal submitted a cost of P10.8 billion so I asked (NIA officials) to prepare a proposal that is cost-efficient but will not sacrifice quality. So they submitted a proposal worth P6.9 billion but which will merely cover the first phase of the irrigation project," he said.

He said the project cost could still be reduced so "that the country would not be saddled with too much debt."

Earlier, some 60,000 Pangasinan farmers and their families asked Japanese embassy officials to help facilitate the release of the loan from Japanese financial institutions.

But another farmers' group, the Tignay Dagiti Mannalon a Mangwayawaya ti Agno (Timmawa), is opposing the project.

Jose Doton, Timmawa president, said the members were opposing the dam p[illegible] and not its irrigation component. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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'Untouchables' defy Davao smoking ban

DAVAO CITY—The city's Anti-Smoking Task Force was preparing administrative charges against former mayor and ex-Interior Secretary Luis Santos and Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso for violation of the Comprehensive Anti-Smoking Ordinance and the Clean Air Act of 1999.

City Administrator Melchor Quitain said the Davao City Police Office (DCPO) will also file criminal charges against the two officials for the same offense.

A TV crew filmed Santos, who is now with the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), smoking inside Camp Catitipan during a recent police day.

The incident triggered criticisms that Chief Supt. Isidro Lapeña, regional police director, and city police chief Senior Supt. Conrado Laza could not arrest Santos.

Police have the job of arresting violators of the smoking ban.

Some 6,300 violators, most of them ordinary citizens, have been arrested since the ban was implemented late last year.

But Lapeña said the police were not giving special treatment to influential people.

He said he did not see Santos smoke inside Camp Catitipan, the regional police headquarters.

"It could not have happened if I saw Santos smoking," Lapeña said. *Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPA owns up killing of Army major

By Marc Villavicencio
PDI Visayas Bureau

CATARMAN, Northern Samar—The New People's Army has owned up the killing of a high-ranking Army officer here last Jan. 23.

In a statement, the Efren Martires Command commended the NPA's Rodante Urtal Command "for meting revolutionary justice on Maj. Danilo Bilion, Operations Chief of the 803rd Brigade of the Philippine Army."

The NPA statement claimed that Bilion was a human rights violator and an alleged terror in Northern Samar.

"Literally hundreds of his victims from the peasant masses have long cried out for justice," the press release pointed out.

Bilion, a resident of Barangay Dalakit, Catarman was shot in the head at noon of Jan. 23 along Mabolo Street in Barangay Magsaysay, Catarman.

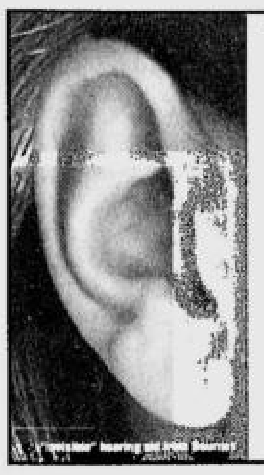
Witnesses disclosed that about five men were involved in the attack.

Two civilians were hit by stray bullets—Rogelio Dones, 39 and Flor Monica, 53.

The NPA statement said the ambush-slaying was carried out by the NPA's Rodante Urtal Command that operates in Northern Samar.

According to the statement, Bilion, then an officer of the Army's 19th IB from 1987 to 1993, was behind cases of torture and killings committed by the teams he was leading.

The NPA said Bilion allegedly directed a forced evacuation in 1987-1988 in the towns of Silvino Lobos, Las Navas and other adjoining towns in Northern Samar.



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Public warned of fake rebels

ARITAO, Nueva Vizcaya—Local and police officials on Friday warned the public against extortion by groups that claim to be members of the New People's Army, and urged victims to immediately report these to government authorities.

The announcement was made following the arrest of three suspected members of an extortion syndicate who victimized local officials and businessmen.

"The public should not fear these elements. So whether they are rebels, or impostors, we should always inform the police," Mayor Ruben Sayo said.

First to be arrested in a series of entrapment operations was Freddie Mallari, who was caught while receiving marked money that his group had demanded from a Chinese-Filipino businessman in Barangay Calitlitan here.

Sayo said he was shocked after learning that it was Mallari, his aide, who had double-crossed him. "This is so disheartening because I practically fed him with my own hands," Sayo said.

The other suspects, Zaldy Soriano and James Garabiles, were arrested in separate follow-up operations.

The suspects, according to police, had identified themselves as NPA rebels and sent their demands for "revolutionary taxes" through demand letters and telephone calls.

In their letters, which bore the NPA logo and purportedly signed by one Ka Denat, the suspects claimed their group had around 20 heavily armed members.

They threatened to harm their victims and their families if the demands were not met, or if they reported the threats to the police.

Police said the group was responsible for a grenade explosion in front of a store owned by a Chinese-Filipino businessman in December 2000. No one was reported hurt in the explosion. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Puffer fish kills 1, downs 40 others

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A member of a clan died while 40 others were hospitalized after eating puffer fish (*Lagocephalus sceleratus*) locally known as "*butete*" in a coastal village here on Friday noon.

The lone fatality was identified as a certain Usman Lungkay, a resident of Sitio Lawis in Barangay Bawing.

Most of those hospitalized belong to the Lungkay and Batua clans. They experienced severe stomachache and dizziness hours after eating the fish.

The victims were at the house of the Lungkays to attend the wake of a relative.

Earlier that day, a member of the clan arrived from a fishing expedition bringing a puffer fish weighing about 2 kilos. The fish was cooked and served for lunch.

About three hours later, all those who ate felt dizzy, vomited and fainted.

When interviewed by reporters in their hospital beds, the victims said they have been eating this kind of fish in the past. But the one who was tasked to cook was not familiar with the correct way of cooking it.

They said they later learned that the deadly nerve present in the fish's body was not removed.

In Japan, diners pay as much as $400 for puffer fish, which is considered a delicacy. Only licensed experts, trained for at least five years, can prepare the fish. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Farmer rep welcomes import rule changes

A BULACAN sectoral representative yesterday expressed thanks to President Macapagal-Arroyo for paving the way for changes in the guidelines governing the Farmers as Rice Importers program and giving small farmers' cooperatives a greater chance to take part in it.

In a press statement, Butil Rep. Benjamin Cruz described Ms Macapagal as "the only President who allowed small farmers to import rice through the NFA for the first time."

Cruz said the government is now assured of the program's success and the country's return to rice self-sufficiency after an agreement was reached by the NFA and farmers' groups.

"Rice importation is now no longer enjoyed only by big rice traders, like the Binondo rice cartel," he said.

He said farmers are elated over the new development at the NFA, and vowed to support the government's objective of reviving the ailing rice farmers' sector.

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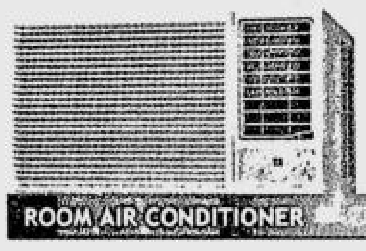

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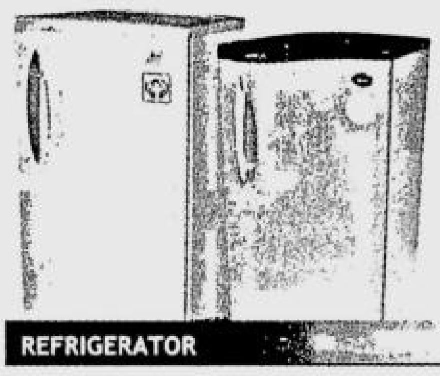

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ROUNDUP

Boy loses pa

COTABATO CITY—A seven-year-old child lost his father and had to be amputated after four men barged into their home and opened fire on Friday morning. Agta Akmad survived the attack but his father, Talib Akmad, died of multiple bullet wounds when the suspects shot him after barging into their home in Alamada, North Cotabato. Agta suffered bullet wounds in the right leg. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Ex-cop nabbed

DAVAO CITY—A former policeman who allegedly topped the watch list of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) was arrested here on Thursday. Police said Evodio Dacuycuy Jr., formerly with the Paquibato police station here, was dismissed from government service in July last year after he went on absence without official leave. PDEA members raided Dacuycuy's house on Artiaga Street here, where they recovered four sachets of shabu, rifle grenades, an M203 grenade launcher, an M60 machinegun, an M16 Armalite rifle, and a .38-cal. revolver. Dacuycuy refused to talk to reporters. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

2 rebs surrender

DAVAO CITY—Two New People's Army members, one of them a minor, surrendered to authorities in Compostela Valley on Tuesday. Edgar Ibaez, 33, of Purok 6, Barangay Linoan in Montevista town, gave up to Insp. Emelio Bartonico, the town's police chief. Ibaez was a member of the NPA's Front Committee 33 operating in Laak and Monkayo towns. In Compostela town, a 15-year-old rebel surrendered to Senior Insp. Mario Sapilan, the town's police chief. The boy, who reportedly joined the underground in July last year, turned over a .22-cal. homemade revolver. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

4 NPAs slain

CATBALOGAN, Samar—Four New People's Army rebels were killed during an encounter with Army soldiers in Sulat town, Eastern Samar last week. Brig. Gen. Glenn Rabonza, chief of the Army's 8th Infantry Division based here, did not identify the fatalities. He said a soldier was also injured in the clash but refused to give his identity pending the notification of his relatives. He said a team from the 82nd Reconnaissance Company and other personnel of the 801st Infantry Brigade based in Eastern Samar raided the communist guerrillas after being tipped off by informants. *Marc Villavicencio, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Gunrunner charged

BACOLOD CITY—Criminal charges were filed against a suspected gunrunner after police seized a cache of firearms and ammunition from his house and two eateries in Sagay City, about 82 kilometers north of here. Vivencio Canoy Velano, 65, of Baranday Poblacion 1, was detained at the Sagay police station to face charges of illegal possession of firearms and ammunition. Velano was allegedly caught while trying to sell two .45-cal. pistols to an unidentified buyer who escaped during the raid on his house. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Colmenares; 63

BACOLOD CITY—Negros Occidental board member Jesus Colmenares died Feb. 19 due to complications from lung cancer. He was 63. His wife, Maria Javellana Colmenares, said Jesus died in his sleep at the Iloilo Doctor's Hospital in Iloilo City, where he had been confined for two months. Colmenares is survived by his wife and children Humberto, Ana Fria, Antonio, Paolo, Maricor, Maricar and Joseph. The burial was set on Mar. 1 at the Philippine Independent Church Cemetery in Bago City, Negros Occidental. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Rights denunciation

TAGBILARAN CITY—A human rights group in Central Visayas denounced the arrest of four men implicated in the Feb. 3 killing of a barangay captain and village watchman in Nueva Montana, Buenavista town. Dennis Abarrientos, Karapatan regional secretary general, identified those arrested as Nueva Montana barangay councilors Edwin Lofranco and Rodrigo Mejias, and peasant leaders Ruben Busalanan and Antonio Sanchez. Sanchez is the chair of the Buenavista Farmers' Association where Busalanan, Lofranco and Mejias are members. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Firearms seized

LEGAZPI CITY—Police seized 359 firearms, 61 of these high-powered, in their campaign against loose firearms in six Bicol provinces in 2002. Chief Supt. Rodolfo Tor, Bicol police chief, said the figure represented a third of the estimated number of loose firearms in the region. In Quezon, police seized at least seven firearms and assorted ammunition during a raid on Wednesday in Barangay Silanganan, Dolores. Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Quezon police chief, identified the suspected gun owner as Eddie Panganiban, 38. *Joyce Mejillano and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ALLEGED ABUSES

Capiz board urges military pullout

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Amid allegations of military abuses, the Capiz provincial board called for an end to military operations in areas occupied by one of Panay Island's indigenous communities.

In a resolution passed Jan. 10, the board sought an end to military operations in Tumandok communities "where they are not welcome" in the towns of Tapaz and Jamindan. The board said civic work by the soldiers may be allowed.

In the resolution, the provincial board also called for the pullout of soldiers from the Tumandok community.

The 13-member legislative body unanimously approved the resolution,' authored by board member Cezar Talabucon, chair of the committee on peace and order and police matters.

The resolution cited the protest of the indigenous group against the presence of soldiers in their community who accused soldiers of human rights violations.

Copies of the resolution have been furnished the Army commander in Panay and Capiz Gov. Vicente Bermejo.

In a special session Nov. 13, 2002 in the hinterland barangay of Acuna, Tapaz, the residents of hinterland villages of Capiz decried the alleged abuses committed by soldiers in their campaign against communist rebels.

The residents coming from at least eight barangays confirmed an earlier report of human rights groups detailing the alleged abuses by the Army's Task Force Panay.

The Task Force Tapaz conducted a fact-finding mission Oct. 7-11 on the alleged human rights violations. The group is a network of human rights organizations led by Karapatan and advocates of the Tumandok community.

The complaints included threats against residents, destruction of crops during military operations, forced recruitment of government militias and enforcement of curfew.

These allegations were repeatedly denied by the Army, claiming that "front organizations" of the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army made up the charges.

In a separate resolution, the board also asked the Commission on Human Rights and the National Commission on Indigenous People to investigate the allegations.

The Tumandoks' is among the oldest tribal community on Panay Island with a population of around 18,000.

THE COLOR of politics fails to overshadow the good mood that characterizes the holding of the Panagbenga, Baguio City's flower festival.
DELMAR CARINO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON

Politics becomes thorn among flowers in Baguio's celebration of 'Panagbenga'

BAGUIO CITY—The first things visitors who flocked to this city for the Panagbenga festivities last week were not the flowers but the faces of politicians who promoted the festival.

The face of Mayor Bernardo Vergara welcomes tourists as soon as they reach La Union on their way to Baguio, thanks to a billboard posted by a promotions company that the city government hired to get commercial sponsors for the 8th Panagbenga.

Starting this year, the city government has taken over the festival, Baguio's top tourist-drawer, from the John Hay Poro Point Development Corp. (JPDC) and the Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco).

Vergara's billboard also greets visitors at the intersection of Kennon Road and Marcos Highway, two main roads to the summer capital.

"This has changed the color of the flower festival," a visitor from Bulacan said after watching the floral float parade and street dancing on Session Road last Saturday.

This was not the first time politics had blended with the festival.

During the 2001 staging of the flower festival, several senatorial candidates mingled with the Panagbenga crowd or joined the parade.

Last weekend, streamers of Sen. Manuel Villar and former senatorial candidate Jamby Madrigal lined up in strategic sections of Baguio.

"But this is the first time local politicians used the festival as a political vehicle. We never encouraged politics when we were running the festival," said a CJHDevco official.

Politics, she said, marred what would otherwise be a "rather successful Panagbenga celebration."

Leticia Clemente, budget officer and chair of the Panagbenga's ways and means committee, said the festival had sustained the momentum set by the past staging of the festival when these were run by the Camp John Hay people.

Given only three months to bring the festival together, Clemente said the city government allotted P9 million for the festival.

A management contract required a Makati-based advertising company to pay the city government P2 million in cash and P3 million in promotional and marketing services.

The obligations will round up the city's P2-million budget outlay and a P1.5-million dividend from the JPDC, Panagbenga's former managers.

The pennants, as well as the billboards, may count among the firm's service obligations "although the city never requested them to feature the city officials in their campaign," said Clemente.

"In fact, we believed the firm lost from this deal," she said.

But the cost of rebuilding a festival from scratch had been "repaid by a good (visitor) turnout," she said. About 100,000 people visited the city last weekend. *Vincentt Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Army captures wife, son of top NPA leader

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

BURAUEN, Leyte—The wife and a son of a top communist leader in Eastern Visayas were captured on Feb. 18 by soldiers while they were about to board a vehicle in Inopacan town, Leyte.

Brig. Gen. Eusebio Ramos, commander of the 802nd Infantry Brigade based in Barangay Abuyogon of this town, presented to the media Antoniota Pegoria and her 13-year-old son.

Ramos told the INQUIRER that Antoniota is the wife of Carlos "Ka Alvin" Pegoria, secretary general of section committee Rodolfo Platoon of the Evelyn Dublin Command, Leyte Front Committee, which operates in the western part of Leyte.

Antoniota said she and her son were about to board a vehicle after visiting her father when soldiers from the 43rd Infantry Battalion arrested them in Barangay Can-angpay, Inopacan town.

Lt. Col. George Rabusa, head of the 43rd IB based in Sogod town, Southern Leyte, said Antoniota was captured on the strength of an arrest warrant issued by Judge Nicomedes Tupaz of the Baybay Regional Trial Court where she is facing charges of multiple murder filed in July 2000.

Normal life

Antoniota was detained at the Baybay municipal jail while her son was placed under the custody of the Department of Social Welfare and Development office in Baybay town, Leyte.

Ramos told the INQUIRER that he felt sad about the boy whom he said was denied of a normal childhood.

"He was deprived of his education and did not enjoy life as a boy because he was always with the group," he said.

The boy told the INQUIRER that he has been with the underground movement since he was 10. Prior to that, he said, he stayed with his maternal grandfather until his parents decided to take him to the mountains to live with them.

He said he only finished Grade 3.

The boy admitted that he did not enjoy his life in the mountain because they were always on the run out of fear that government soldiers might find them.

Gun skill

As an NPA member, the boy said he was involved in community organizing. He said he could dismantle an M-16 rifle in less than three minutes.

The boy described Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA, as "our leader and a good man." "(Sison) is fighting for a cause," he said in the vernacular.

The boy said they were taught to hate the soldiers because "they are our enemies."

Antoniota said she had to join the underground movement in 1999 to join her husband who had been a member of the New People's Army since the 1980s.

"I just followed him. I have no choice. Besides, they told us that our government could not offer us a good life," she said, referring to the leaders of the communist group.

She said she has another son, aged 17, who was once an NPA member but who left the group in 2001. He is now in Manila earning a living as a construction worker, she said.

Book claims man can live to be 1,000 years old

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—Do you want to live to be 1000? A Filipino author of a newly launched book on evolution and creation says this is possible.

Gabriel Atega, an accountant who manages a printing company in Davao City, offered hope to the world's vanishing race by offering a solution: We must stop all wars. We must restore everything to what it once was from the very beginning.

Atega, during the recent launching of his book "Evolution Deception" at Silliman University, said this would mean raising the earth's temperature to a constant warm temperature, which he believes is the temperature that prevailed at the Garden of Eden. This would mean that the South Pole and the North Pole would have lost most of its ice. It will also mean that we stop all wars.

Atega's theory was derived after looking into the theory of evolution, which he eventually debunked, and by also studying the Bible.

"If we interpret the scriptures in reverse, we can say that peace can give humanity additional life span of a hundred years, with good environment some 400 years and unity among nations some 150 years. People can live again up to a thousand years!"

He cited the ages of the people listed in the Book of Genesis, which neared 1000—Adam was 930 years old; Seth, 912; Enos, 905; Cainan, 910; Mahalaleel, 895; Jared, 962 and Methuselah, 969.

The life spans of people, he said, were much longer before the Great Flood than of people born after it. While Noah lived to be 950 years old, his son Shem reached 602. The life span became shorter, with Arphaxad reaching 438; Salah, 433 and Eber, 464.

Peleg, who was born when the continents were formed, was only 239. Reu was 239; Serug, 230; Nahor, 138; Terah, 205 and Abraham, 175.

The shortening life span, he said, is the side effect of the Ice Age, when flood waters turned to ice.

"I'm not a scientist but I believe that as an accountant, I also use scientific methods because we have to have proof before we come up with our report," he said.

He said he thinks he has proven the evolution theory deceptive.

Atega said he tried to believe in the evolution theory but he just couldn't make it work. "Evolution," he said, "has no basis at all, even in science."

He said evolution theorists present single-celled animals becoming complex life forms so easily as if it was a natural occurrence.

This, he said, is far from the truth because it takes seven conditions before life is formed.

The first is for amino acids and chemicals to assemble logically into a structure.

Second, there has to be cells or structured containers for the amino acids.

Third, life forms have DNA, the life instruction sets for their proper functioning.

Fourth, they must have a nervous system. Fifth, they have to have food. Sixth, they must have a reproductive system and seventh, an event must integrate and trigger the functions of the six conditions, something that no natural event can provide.

GMA to Saddam: Go for 'win-win'

From page A1

A "great future" awaits both Iraq and North Korea if they submit to the demands of the United Nations, she said.

"In accordance with the call made by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in his message read to us today, perhaps President Hussein might now wish to take the initiative and invite the UN Secretary General, the UN inspectors, representatives of the doubting countries," Ms Macapagal said in her speech at the Putra World Trade Center here. The President was the fifth head of state to speak at the summit's plenary meeting in the afternoon.

"Perhaps he (Saddam) may wish to show them all they want to see, so that the fears of the world can be assuaged, so that we can have peace."

Bush line

The President had earlier urged Iraq to disarm and asked the United Nations to act with "dispatch and force" should Iraq fail to fully cooperate with arms inspectors—an echo of the Bush administration's hardline stance.

Senior officials of the 116-nation summit adopted a resolution Saturday, urging Iraq to step up cooperation with UN arms inspectors.

Annan, in a speech delivered by his special representative Lakhdar Brahimi, said inspections were beginning to yield results and should therefore be allowed to continue "until all weapons of mass destruction are destroyed and accounted for."

"Iraq must disarm. It must cooperate fully and proactively with the inspectors. This makes clear that what is required at this stage is cooperation, persistence and constant pressure," he said.

The United States and Britain this week are seeking a second resolution from the UN Security Council authorizing a military strike on Iraq.

Nokor appeal

The President also called on North Korea to drop its nuclear weapons program, although Pyongyang appeared to have escaped censure by the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole.

"This is the reason why the Philippines joins the call of the international community for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. My countrymen and I earnestly pray that war will be avoided," Ms Macapagal said.

Her remarks came shortly after negotiators backed down from an attempt to pressure fellow-member North Korea to reverse its decision to quit the NPT.

A resolution to be presented at the summit says the leaders simply "noted the withdrawal of the DPRK (North Korea) from the NPT," according to a final draft obtained by AFP.

An earlier draft "underlined the importance of the DPRK's participation in the NPT," but those words have been dropped following objections from North Korea.

The result is a compromise, as Pyongyang had originally wanted a resolution blaming the United States for the crisis on the Korean Peninsula, and when that was immediately rejected, tried unsuccessfully to insert a phrase about ensuring North Korea's security.

Ms Macapagal stressed that "a great future" awaits Iraq and North Korea if they submit to a "strategic accommodation" with the UN demands.

"There is a great future for an outward-looking and pluralistic Iraq, and an outward-looking and pluralistic Democratic People's Republic of Korea," she said, noting that this would enable Iraq to make peace with its neighbor states, Kuwait and Iran, and North Korea with South Korea.

This would lead their peoples to "peace and prosperity," and "perpetuate their leaders" in history.

No resolve

A Southeast Asian diplomat told AFP: "There was not enough resolve anymore to push the negotiations when North Korea was really in no mood to compromise at all."

He said, however, that member states had made clear their concern about North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT during the debate on the resolution.

While this might not be reflected in the statement, "they certainly heard it and this language will not give them comfort that they have any support from the region for what they have done," he said.

Pyongyang had looked to its membership in NAM, which consists mainly of developing countries, as one of the few friendly global venues open to it, but Seoul and Washington, attending the summit as observers, mounted a strong lobby against the North Korean position. *With a report from AFP*

Mahathir calls for worldwide ban on war

From page A1

said, "invariably involves injustice and oppression of people of other ethnic origins and colors."

"It is no longer just a war against terrorism. It is in fact a war to dominate the world, i.e., the chromatically different world."

Message to Washington

Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri told reporters that Mahathir's speech was a message to Washington to "listen carefully to the voice of the public opinion, which is against war. Those who call for war are public enemies now, enemies of humanity."

US envoy Charles Twining, an observer at the conference, said he would relay Mahathir's comments to Washington. "He's a friend of ours, we listen to what he says. We're not here to judge what anyone says at the conference," Twining said.

During the run-up to the summit, foreign ministers reached consensus on urging Iraq to "actively comply" with UN resolutions to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, while also opposing any unilateral US attack.

But efforts to urge North Korea to return to a key nuclear arms-control treaty fell apart Monday.

The North Koreans changed direction after initially agreeing to a statement that "underlined the importance" of their participation in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, delegates said. The final draft omitted the phrasing, according to the document.

The dispute with North Korea reflected what Mahathir termed the movement's "struggle to outlaw nuclear weapons."

Six summit participants—Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Guinea, Pakistan and Syria—are members of the 15-seat UN Security Council, where the United States and Britain need a nine-vote majority to authorize an attack on Iraq.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, in a message to the summit, cautioned against any action without Security Council authorization, saying weapons inspections in Iraq were "beginning to yield results."

"I believe that war, even now, is not inevitable," Annan said. "I urge the Iraqi leadership to choose full transparency and cooperation with the inspectors to help avoid conflict."

Iran's President Mohammad Khatami warned an attack on Iraq would "strengthen extremism" and urged the world to "say 'no' to war-mongering and policies bent on violence and vengeance."

Heed people's cry

In his speech, Mahathir urged the leaders of non-aligned countries to join in their people's opposition to a US-led strike on Iraq, saying failure to do so would prompt their citizens to rebel against their oppressors.

"We must admit that our organization has not been as effective as it should be. We may want to remain uninvolved and to avoid incurring the displeasure of the powerful countries. But our people are getting restless. They want us to do something," he warned.

"If we don't, then they will. And they will go against us; they will take things into their own hands. Unable to mount a conventional war, they will resort to guerrilla war, to terrorism, against us and against those they consider to be their oppressors."

Mahathir said all countries must get rid of their nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

"Weapons of mass destruction must be disallowed for all. And there should be no more research into making conventional weapons more lethal," he added.

Red carpet welcome

Earlier, Mahathir gave a red-carpet welcome into the main summit hall for leaders ranging from Cuban President Fidel Castro to Bahrain's prime minister, Sheik Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, while a traditional Malay band played woodwind instruments and drums at the Putra World Trade Center..

The Asian island nation of East Timor, the world's newest country, and the former British colony of St. Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean were formally inducted, boosting the movement to 116 members.

The Non-Aligned Movement was founded in 1955 to steer a neutral path between the United States and the Soviet Union, sometimes playing one off the other for leverage. The group has struggled to maintain relevancy after the Cold War ended.

Mahathir seems intent on reinventing the group as an anti-war movement that could reach out to doves in rich countries—which he refers to collectively as "the North"—to form an influential voice to oppose the "slaughter of people for whatever reason."

"We know we are weak. But we also know we have allies in the North," he said. "They have come out in their millions to protest the warlike policies of their leaders . . . We must join their struggle with all the moral force that we can command." *With reports from AP and TJ Burgonio*

MARINES under the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force march wearing gas masks at a camp in the Kuwaiti desert south of Iraq on Sunday. AP

Bush told: Remember the Cuban Crisis

THE FOUNDATION for Worldwide People Power (FWPP) yesterday called on President Macapagal-Arroyo and all peace-loving Filipinos to stand firm with the rest of the world in the common quest for lasting peace.

"We join the world in its resonant call for a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Iraq," the group said in a statement on the 17th anniversary of the peaceful Edsa Revolution of 1986.

In his book, "In Retrospect," Former US Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara recalled how dangerously close the world was to nuclear disaster during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, FWPP noted.

FWPP said McNamara candidly observed that the decisions made at the time by the United States, the Soviet Union and Cuba were distorted by "misinformation, misjudgment and miscalculation" and could have very conceivably escalated into a war to end all humanity.

"Like the Kennedy and Johnson administrations before him, Dubya is now acting according to what he thinks are 'the principles and traditions' of his great nation. But he is mistaken in his priorities-as his predecessors were mistaken in Vietnam-and the whole world has told him so," the group said.

"Still, despite this magnificent display of People Power, President George W. Bush remains unmoved in his plan to unleash American military might against Saddam Hussein with little regard to the worldwide devastation such a war might cause," FWPP said.

AMERICAN and British officers meet during training for a helicopter assault north of Kuwait City on Sunday. AP

Soldiers, cops in Mindanao placed on full alert

From page A1

reports that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front were out to sow terror in the coming days.

"We will not take it (the warning against Americans) lightly, we'll implement the usual security preparations," Santiago said in a telephone interview. "(We'll) intensify our intelligence monitoring."

Santiago said the AFP had also started receiving text messages warning government forces of more attacks.

"We do not take anything lightly, we take everything seriously," he said, adding that it would be up to the local military commanders to determine if it was necessary to upgrade the security status in their areas.

Police officials in Camp Crame said they had also started to receive text messages and phone calls warning them about impending terrorist attacks.

Over the weekend, Muslim leaders led by Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao Gov. Parouk Hussin had warned the Macapagal administration that the presence of American soldiers in Sulu might inflame the passions of the Tausug people who haven't forgotten the massacre of a thousand people by soldiers led by Gen. Leonard Wood in Bud Dahu in Patikul, Sulu, in 1906.

Spillover

Echoing their warnings, Sen. Manuel Villlar Jr. warned that the deployment of US troops in Sulu might provoke more violence not only among the predominantly Islamic population in the Sulu archipelago but also in other parts of Mindanao. "We know that our Muslim countrymen have ill feelings against the US war (on terrorism) and many of them look at this war as a war against Islam," said Villar, chair of the Senate foreign relations committee.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon asked the joint legislative oversight committee on the Visiting Forces Agreement to convene and conduct an inquiry into the new joint military exercise.

Davao City Rep. Prospero Nograles said it would be "wrong timing" for the government to proceed with the exercise given the crisis in Iraq.

"I tend to agree with some of my colleagues (that it is best) to postpone the exercise until the US-Iraq crisis is resolved," Nograles said in a news conference.

Caloocan City Rep. Edgar Erice took to the floor yesterday to protest US participation in the pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf.

"If we allow the Americans to have an operation in Mindanao, without limitations, we might become another Nicaragua and Colombia. There will be no peace but only war," Erice said in a privilege speech he delivered in Filipino.

Muntinlupa Rep. Rufino Biazon and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said the joint RP-US military exercise in Sulu should be postponed until the confusing and contradictory statements of Malacañang and the White House have been clarified.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the conflicting statements implied that the Philippine and US governments "cannot even have a common position" on actual US involvement.

"I will request our committee on foreign relations to immediately conduct a hearing, find out what are the terms of reference, indeed whether or not these Americans are just training or will engage in combat," Drilon told reporters.

Consultations later

Meanwhile, Malacañang said yesterday that consultations would be conducted, but only after the terms of reference for the controversial Balikatan 03-1 in Sulu had been worked out by Philippine and United States officials.

"In due time as soon as terms of reference are worked, I'm sure the process of consultations will take place," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said

Bunye was reacting to criticisms, particularly by local officials, that they were not consulted regarding the maneuvers that US authorities say will involve American forces going into combat against the Abu Sayyaf, a claim strongly being denied by the Macapagal administration.

"We have denied that and we stand by our earlier stand that there will be no (American) combat troops," Bunye said.

But in the Senate, Villar said he doubted whether Malacañang was serious when Bunye declared that the government would scrap the Sulu exercises if the US insisted on sending its troops to fight on Philippine territory.

"I don't believe that they can scrap it. The problem is, America won't listen to us," Villar said.

"It (US) does not listen to the United Nations. Russia, Germany, China and France are also not being heard by the US," he added.

Not full alert

In Zamboanga City, Southern Command chief Lt. General Narciso Abaya denied declaring a full alert in Mindanao following the circulation of text messages on the MILF's alleged plan to launch attacks in the island.

Abaya said there was no need for a full alert declaration because "we have been on red alert even before this false scare came out."

"What I did was call up all the brigade commanders under the AOR (area of responsibility) of Southcom and relay to them the information," Abaya told the INQUIRER.

Declaring a full alert, he added, will only cause alarm among the people, "and it's unnecessary because it turned out a false scare." *With reports from Rosa-May V. de Guzman and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet Javellana, Carlito Pablo*

SOUTHERN COMMAND
CAMP NAVARRO
ZAMBOANGA CITY

AN AMERICAN and a Filipino soldier in full battle regalia man a machine gun atop a Humvee parked right in front of the Southern Military Command headquarters in Camp Navarro, Zamboanga City, on Monday. EDWIN BACASMAS

Hong Kong willing to listen on maids' tax issue, but . . .

By Cynthia D. Balana

HONG KONG is willing to listen to appeals from the Philippines on the proposed HK$400 levy on the wages of foreign domestic helpers there, Senate President Franklin Drilon said yesterday.

But Drilon did not appear too optimistic on the results.

Drilon said he met on Saturday with Rita Fan Hsu Lai-tai, president of the Hong Kong Legislative Council, who expressed willingness to entertain petitions from the Filipino government and community on the issue.

"Madame Fan was gracious to say the Hong Kong legislature was willing to listen to the concerns of our domestic helpers on the proposed levy," Drilon said. He added Fan told him she would refer the petitions to the council.

He said he also met with Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-Hua, but unlike Fan, Tung could not make a commitment to Drilon on the levy issue.

Tung, he said, appealed instead for understanding of Hong Kong's economic situation and the need to raise revenues to reduce a huge budget deficit.

Hong Kong authorities had defended the new tax measure, saying it was needed to cushion the economic crisis and called on the foreign domestics to "share the burden."

Drilon said the Hong Kong government may make a decision on the levy before March 5. He said the HK government will also soon impose a six-percent wage cut for civil servants.

"To be honest, we have to be prepared for some unfavorable decision on the part of Hong Kong because this is an indication of where they are going," the Senate President said.

The new tax measure would impose a HK$9,600 levy on every standard two-year contract for foreign maids, resulting in a HK$400 deduction from their current monthly minimum wage of HK$3,270.

At the same time, Drilon denied allegations by migrant worker groups that the Philippine government had given up on helping the Filipino domestics in Hong Kong.

"Definitely, we are not giving up. We will walk an extra mile if necessary in order to prevent this unjustified burden on our Filipino workers in Hong Kong," Drilon said.

Spratlys sportsfest mulled

THE PHILIPPINES and Vietnam are seriously considering holding athletic competitions in the Spratlys, a chain of islands being disputed by several nations, including both countries.

The proposal is a top priority on the agenda of the three-day Philippines-Vietnam Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation meeting, which starts tomorrow at the Dusit Hotel in Makati.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople and Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien will lead their respective delegations.

Department of Foreign Affairs officials said the proposed sports program would be discussed on top of security and defense issues and economic cooperation.

As planned, the games will be hosted alternately by the two countries, each in their respective claimed and occupied islands.

Also up for discussion are joint military exercises and an exchange of military students. *Norman Bordadora*

TUNAY NA
SA LUPA AT
IPAGLABAN
REFORM
AGILE BEHIND CONVERSION OF FISHING AREAS! 'PAMALAKAYA'
AGILE OUT OF THE COUNTRY 'PAMALAKAYA'
AGILE OUT NOW!
AGILE BEHIND PRO-US AFMA & FISH CODE 'PAMALAKAYA'
AGILE OUT NOW!
AG MA NG PALAYA

ANTI-AGILE, TOO
Members of Pamalakaya, a militant fisherfolk group, protest Agile's alleged lobbying of the Philippine government that could affect a $10-million program on integrated coastal resources. The group also demanded the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo, at a rally at Mendiola yesterday. ERIK ARAZAS

Solons smarting from Agile snub

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

REPRESENTATIVES of the United States-funded lobby group Accelerating Growth, Investment and Liberalization with Equity (Agile) cannot snub a summons from the Senate of the Philippines.

"They must appear," said an adamant Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday, when asked if Agile representatives would still be called to the Senate.

Not one of the Agile officials identified on its website appeared before the Senate hearings into the activities of the group which opened Feb. 20, prompting the senators to demand their attendance at the next hearing.

But when that will be is uncertain now as the Senate has scheduled marathon morning and afternoon sessions next week to pass the General Appropriations Act of 2003.

"As soon as [there is an] available slot, we will subpoena the Agile officials and warn them to appear under the pain of contempt," Drilon said.

Only Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura and officials of the Deparment of Finance faced the Senate inquiry, leaving them to answer for the activities of Agile consultants holding office in their respective agencies.

Sen. Vicente Sotto, emerging from a meeting of the minority where the Senate schedule was discussed, said the Senate might be able to continue the Agile inquiry on Wednesday morning.

"There will be nothing on the schedule except the budget hearing in the next few weeks," Sotto said. "The only exception is the committee of the whole inquiry on Agile."

Agile has been described as a lobby group funded by the US Assistance for International Development (USAID), which had "planted" consultants in several government agencies allegedly to influence policy-making in favor of US interests.

The Agile representatives reportedly hold office in the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Securities and Exchange Commission, the Departments of Transportation and Communications, Finance, and Budget and Management, and the National Telecommunications Commission.

The group was allegedly behind efforts to pressure Congress into amending the Anti-Money Laundering Act in compliance with the demands of the Financial Action Task Force.

The Agile website claimed that among its achievements were the amendments to the SEC law and the passage of the energy and e-commerce laws.

Lawyer says NBI 'getting personal' in Acsa case

THE LAWYER of Land Bank of the Philippines cashier Acsa Ramirez has complained that the National Bureau of Investigation was "getting too personal" in her case after the NBI asked the Ombudsman to reconsider its decision dismissing the anti-money laundering charges against her.

Virginia Pinlac, Ramirez's lawyer, noted that the NBI did not ask for a reconsideration in the case against the primary suspect in the tax diversion scam, Art San Juan.

"I wonder why they moved for a reconsideration of Acsa's case and not on the dismissal of (one of the) charges against Art San Juan," Pinlac said.

"This only shows that the NBI is getting personal. They're getting too personal on Acsa," Pinlac said.

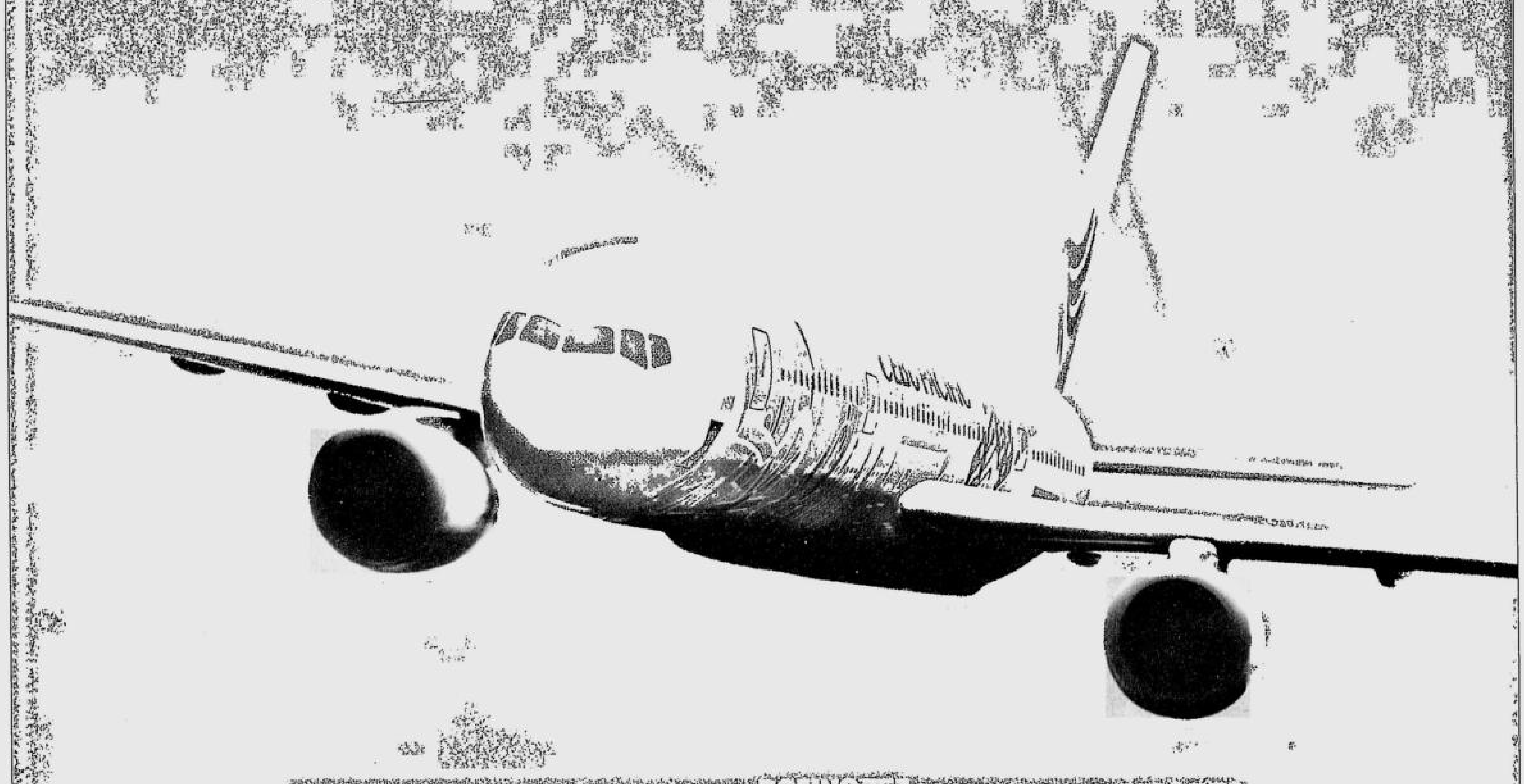
Ramirez was the cashier who blew the whistle on the P431-million tax diversion scam last year but was mistakenly presented by NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco as a suspect at a press conference attended by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Last week, the Ombudsman dismissed all the money laundering charges against Ramirez and one of the money laundering charges against San Juan. It approved the filing of charges against Ramon Joven, Ramirez's predecessor as cashiér at the Landbank-Binangonan branch.

In its motion for reconsideration, the NBI said Ramirez should be included in the charge sheet because "she committed the same omissions" Joven allegedly committed and she "likewise clearly manifest(ed) evident negligence in her failure to report the covered transactions as required by law."

Ramirez's lawyer noted that while it was natural for the NBI to file a motion for reconsideration, the bureau did not move for the reconsideration of the charges against San Juan. *Philip C. Tubeza*

HERE'S AN EVEN BIGGER REASON TO FLY CEBU PACIFIC.



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5J-569	Daily	1500	1610	P2,569
Cebu - Manila				
Flt. No.	Freq.	ETD	ETA	One-Way Value Fare
5J-556	Mon/Fri	0300	0410	P2,199*
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SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

GAB LICENSE

4 PBA cagers fail medical test

By June Navarro

FOUR Philippine Basketball Association players failed to make the grade set by the Games and Amusements Board in order to secure a professional license, GAB chair Eduardo Villanueva yesterday told the Inquirer.

Villanueva said the cagers flunked the initial medical tests conducted by PBA in-house physician Ben Salud.

A reliable source said three of the players were found to be suffering from hepatitis while another was tested positive for marijuana use.

Villanueva declined to reveal the identity of the players pending the final recommendations of Dr. Salud.

"We leave it up to the PBA doctors. But if we find some discrepancy on their findings, then the GAB will look into the matter," said Villanueva.

"It's also better not to divulge their names because in doing so, the players involved and the interests of the league will be at risk. The PBA also has to protect its interests," he added.

All the PBA teams except Batang Red Bull have already taken the medical tests prescribed by the GAB for the cagers to obtain a professional license good for one season.

In another development, the GAB asked PBA officials to present the league's amended contract with Viva-Vintage for the 2002 season.

Villanueva said the amended contract would determine if the GAB would reduce the P3.3-million tax the PBA owes the government last year.

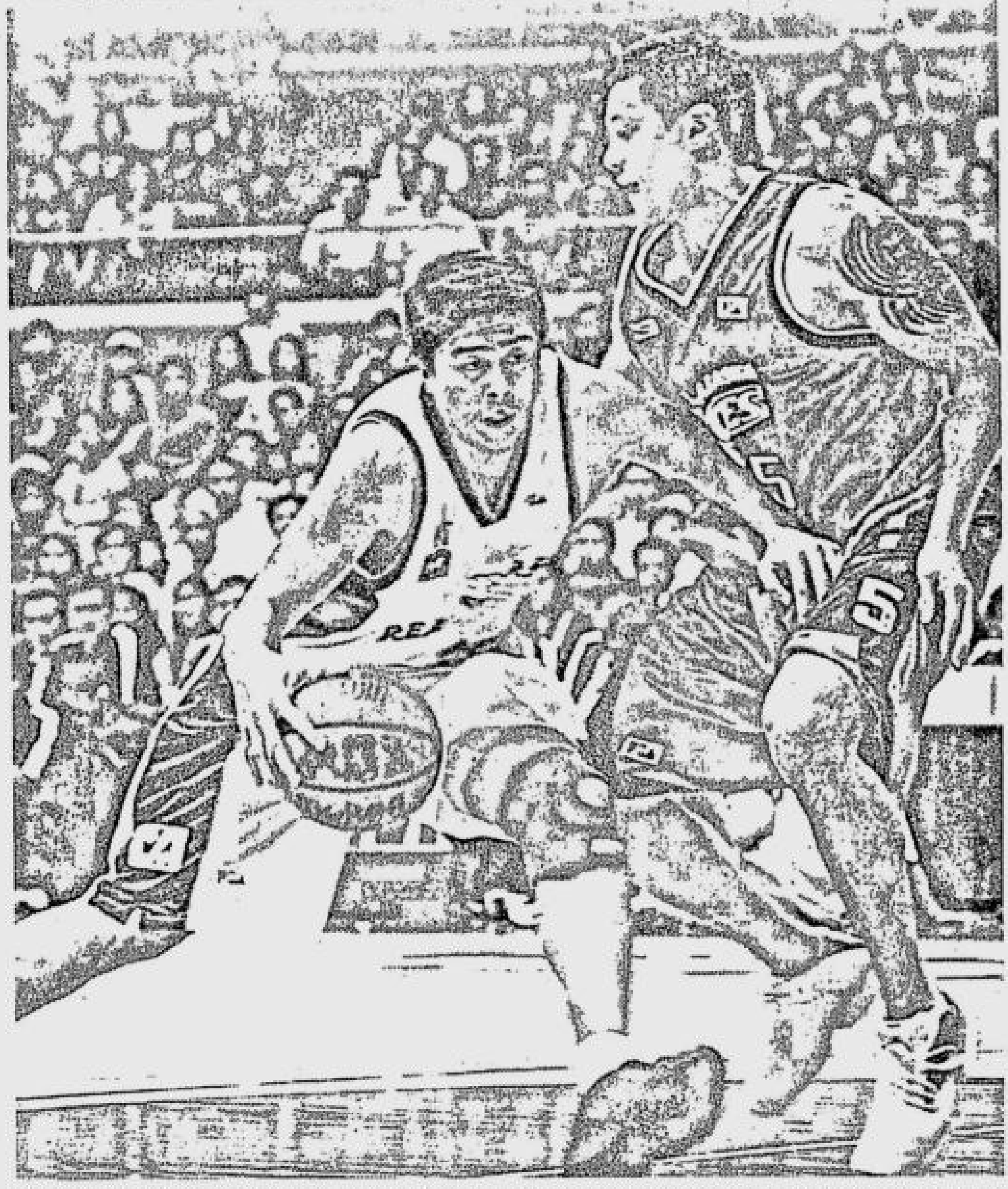
In a meeting with PBA commissioner Noli Eala yesterday, Villanueva also asked the league to deposit the said amount to the Equitable Bank while the PBA's appeal is ongoing.

Villanueva said the PBA would appeal to Malacanang to reduce the league's financial obligations with the GAB.

The GAB is mandated by law to collect at least three percent from the gross earnings of the PBA every year. The PBA draws the fund to pay its obligation to the government from the league's television earnings.

PBA officials claimed the league's contract with Viva-Vintage was altered to suit the coveror's financial capability.

Viva-Vintage suffered great losses in terms of advertising and low television ratings during its coverage of the PBA games last year. A top Viva-Vintage official cited the economic crunch as the chief culprit.



STA. Lucia Realty's Kenneth Duremdes forces his way toward the basket against Rob Duat of Alaska in this piece of action during the opener of the PBA All Filipino Cup Sunday. Alaska won, 91-82.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Warriors, Stags down Nat'l Students rivals

By Roy Luarca

LEGAZPI CITY--Breezy for University of the East, bumpy for San Sebastian College.

That's the separate route they took in beating their inaugural opponents yesterday in the 57th National Students Basketball Championships at the Albay Astrodome here UE pulled away early and went on to rout Divine World College of Legaspi, 109-63, in Group A while SSC struggled past Angeles University Foundation, 87-76, in Group C of the collegiate division.

Leaving nothing to chance, UE coach Boyzie Zamar ordered a trapping defense right at the start. With Charles Tan, Olan Omiping and Adrian Ronquillo also hitting from the three-point zone, the Warriors zoomed to a 57-29 halftime bulge from which the Falcons never recovered.

Zamar let his relievers finish the job and they responded by padding the lead to 100-50, sending signals of the Warriors title aspirations this year.

Tan wound up with 19 points, highlighted by five triples, while Ronquillo finished with 14, including four triples. Paulo Hubalde contributed 17 points, Robert Labagala 13 and main man James Yap 10, despite sitting out the second half.

"After my boys found their rhythm, I just allowed them to do their thing," said Zamar, who piloted the Warriors to last year's Bantay Bata and Battle of Champions titles before steering them to the top of the recent National Capital Region eliminations.

While the Warriors had an easy time, the NCAA Stags found it hard to adjust to the absence of point guards Christian Coronel and Roy Falcasantos, both of whom have graduated, and head coach Turo Valenzona, who is attending to pressing commitments.

In the high school division, San Beda College dumped Divine Word, 103-33, at the DWHS gym.

University of Visayas clobbered Aquinas, 124-83, in Group D of the Collegiate division.

Gov. Al Francis Bichara did the ceremonial toss in the simple opening rites. Bichara who is taking a hands-on approach in the running of the tournament, was assisted by Vice Gov. Jesus Calisin, Legaspi Mayor Noel Rosal, BAP auditor Tony Fabico and Naga City councilor Julian Lavadia, the BAP Region V director.

The tournament, also known as the National Inter-Collegiate and Inter-Secondary Championships, is being supported by Cebuana Lhuillier, Healthy Options, Molten, Baker's Fair, Absolut and Burlington socks.

If Bush were a golfer

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

DAVAO CITY-- The war in Iraq is a hot topic among golfers participating in the PAL Interclub.

"I hate war," said Alex Prieto, a mainstay of the Manila Golf Club. "I saw hell in war with my own eyes during the Japanese occupation. Terrible."

Alex, the sweet-swinging former national player, said he's been praying hard for US President George W. Bush to abort his plans to invade Iraq using America's full military might.

"I hope and pray that Mr. Bush will realize the senselessness of war," said Alex. "In war, there are only losers and no winners."

Many participants echo the sentiments aired by Alex, who captained the RP Ladies Team to the 1996 World Golf championship.

One PAL Interclub participant who is very vocal in articulating his opinion on the US stance against Iraq is Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato. He calls Bush a weak leader.

"Bush talks of war, threatens us with war, but he is not really a decisive person," said Piñol, a major cog of the Davao City Golf Club of Matina in the 56th PAL men's regular tournament that begins on Wednesday. "He talks a lot."

Piñol, known for his hard-line stance against secessionist movements in Mindanao, disapproves of the way Bush has been handling the Iraq issue.

"The world doesn't know whom to believe anymore," said Piñol, a consistent headline stuff among national dailies for his reputation as a no-nonsense fighter of terrorists in his turf. "Bush has unmasked himself as a man of words and not of action."

I have seen war only in the movies. And I consider it really dreadful. Black Hawk Down. Platoon. Deer Hunter. Enemy at The Gates. Night of The Generals. Schindler's List. And many more.

Mao Zedong said a revolution is not a picnic, neither is it a sewing session.

I remember someone aptly using the words " right" and "left" to describe war: "War is not whether one is right or wrong, but what's left of it."

Perhaps, if Bush were a rabid golfer, he won't be acting the way he does. Golfers are known advocates of peace. When confronted by conflicts, golfers would rather that they cool off their heels on the course than meet the issue head-on. They'd "pause a while and smell the flowers."

As it is right now, Bush seems to favor the scent of gunpowder over that of a rose. That way he makes America's economy afloat? Said a text message I received a while back:

"How sure are you that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction?" a UN official asked an American envoy.

"We have the receipts," came the envoy's answer.

Now fancy that.

THE La Salle Green Hills High School basketball team recently qualified for the ongoing National Students Basketball Finals in Legazpi, Albay. The LSGH "Greenies" is coached by Tonichi Pujante (extreme left) and assisted by Leo Pujante (extreme right) with Melo Gaba (second from left) as team manager.

All set for SL transfer to Carmona

MANILA Jockey Club, Inc. has set the groundwork for the eventual diversification of its business interests from its core horse racing operation at the historic San Lazaro Hippodrome to other growth areas like real estate property development and related concerns, consistent with its corporate thrust to achieve greater progress and profitability in the near term.

Dubbed as the "Onward To Progress Plan," MJCI's ambitious development objectives were recently laid out by MJCI president and chief executive Alfonso Reyno, Jr. as preparations for the planned transfer of the club's racing operation to a new site in Carmona, Cavite went into high gear.

"This ambitious development plan is part of our thrust to revitalize the prestige and reputation of the Manila Jockey Club, not only as world-class race club, but as a progressive and fully-diversified company," said Reyno.

MJCI's "Onward to Progress Plan" will be put into motion in the coming weeks as top management prepares to finalize the transfer of its racing operation from its current metropolitan site to a fully-integrated 77-hectare horse racing complex in Carmona to be known as the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

The San Lazaro Leisure Park is being developed as an ultra-modern horseracing complex that blends world-class sports and entertainment facilities with an upscale residential subdivision.

As part of the preparation for the grand sendoff to Carmona, MJCI will be hosting starting this Tuesday (Feb. 25), a week-long racing extravaganza to mark the second annual staging of the "Karera Para sa Puso" Racefest, in cooperation with the Senate Spouses' Foundation, Inc. (SSFI).

Preparatory to the scheduled start of races at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, MJCI and SSFI will be co-hosting a luncheon to signal the start of the 6-day racing fund-raiser.

SPORTSTV Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Jazz vs Grizzlies, 9 a.m. (r - 8 p.m.), Bulls vs Suns (Game 6, 1993 Finals), 12 noon (r - 11 p.m.), Solar Sports

GOLF: Nissan Open, 2 p.m. (r), Star Sports . Carlsberg Malaysian Open, 9 p.m., Star Sports

TENNIS: Kroger St. Jude, 9 a.m. (r), Star Sports

POOL: Rack 'Em Up 2, 10:30 a.m. (r), Star Sports

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Razon golfest on today

Miñoza, Rosales, Sinfuego head cast in P3.5-M event

CANLUBANG—Streaking Richard Sinfuego leads the chase for the top P1 million purse in the P3.5-million Don Pocholo Razon Memorial Invitational golf championship starting today (Tuesday, Feb. 25) at The Country Club here.

Sinfuego is aiming to resume his winning ways over a field toughened up by the entry of two of the country's top shotmakers.

Frankie Miñoza tries to atone for his unimpressive showing the last time he played on local tour as he sets out as one of the favorites together with Gerald Rosales, who is coming into the event oozing with confidence following a solid top 10 showing in just-concluded Malaysian Open.

Cassius Casas is also out to bounce back from back-to-back setbacks while the likes of Rey Pagunsan, Danny Zarate, Angelo Que, Rodrigo Cuello, Robert Pactolerin, Benjie Magada, Antonio Lascuña and Ruben Sasutil are also expected to crowd the favorites.

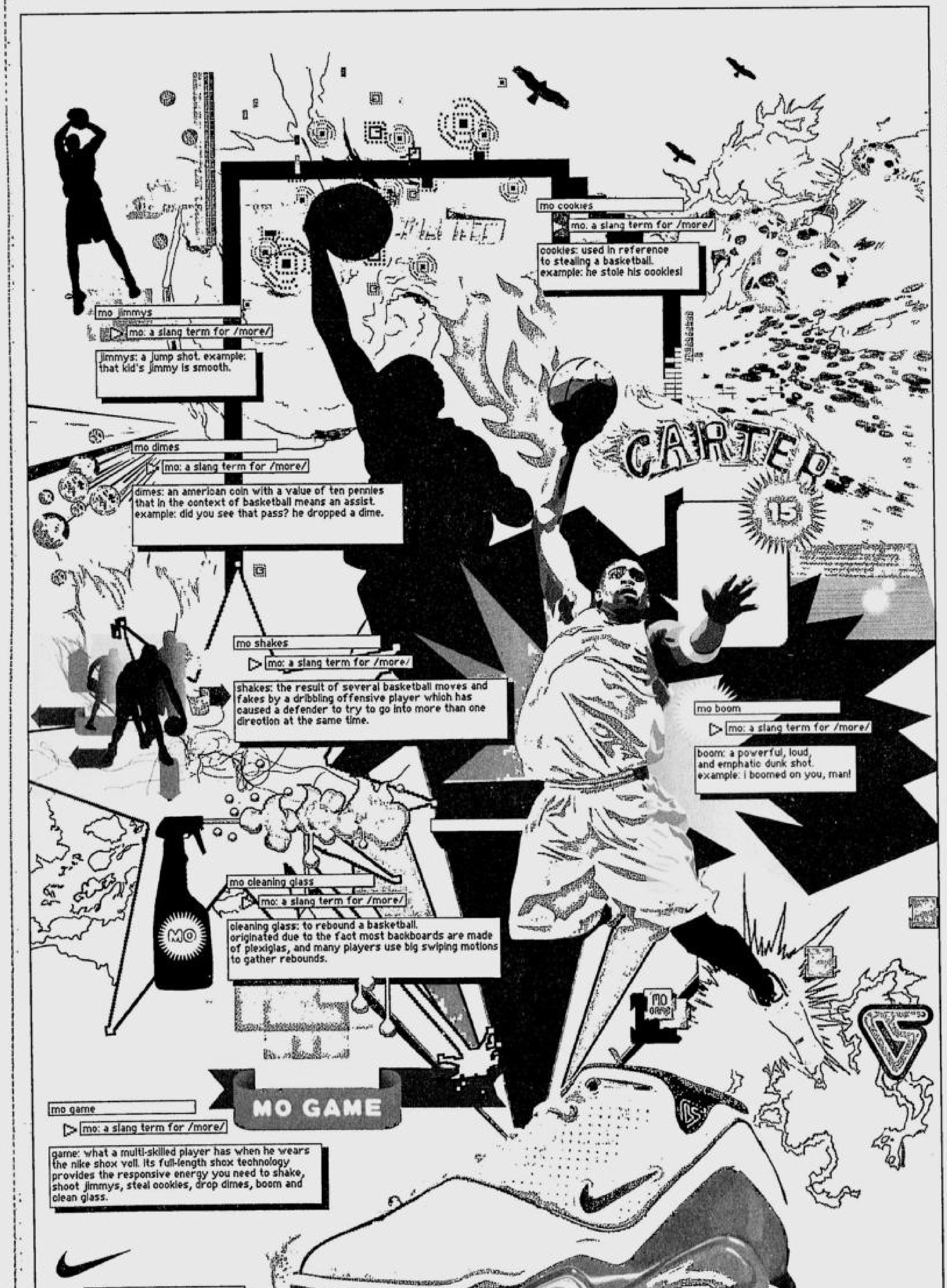
Gerard Cantada, the former national champion whose focus has shifted from competing to teaching future superstars, also makes a rare appearance in the event being staged b Ricky Razon Jr., president of the International Container Services Inc. to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo, who founded ICTSI in 1987 and turned it into the biggest ports management company in the country.

But with two victories in the last two weeks, Sinfuego looms as the prohibitive favorite although he will not only contend with a talent-laden field but also with an unfamiliar layout which changes in character and condition in every swirl of the winds.

The first round coincides with the one-day pro-am tournament where two round-trip tickets to the US West Coast, courtesy of Northwest Airlines, will be raffled off for the amateurs and two full sets of Nike pro-combo irons for the pros during the awards rites.

re Airlines
h PA INTERCLUB
LF TOURN T

INTERCLUB CHAMP
Members of the Luisita Team are shown after winning the 56th PAL Interclub Championship Division Sunday in Davao City. Heading the squad is Capt. Rudy Samson (fourth from left). ROGER MARGALLO


mo jimmys
mo: a slang term for /more/
jimmys: a jump shot. example: that kid's jimmy is smooth.
mo cookies
mo. a slang term for /more/
cookies: used in reference to stealing a basketball. example: he stole his cookies!
mo dimes
mo: a slang term for /more/
dimes: an american coin with a value of ten pennies that in the context of basketball means an assist. example: did you see that pass? he dropped a dime.
mo shakes
mo: a slang term for /more/
shakes: the result of several basketball moves and fakes by a dribbling offensive player which has caused a defender to try to go into more than one direction at the same time.
mo boom
mo: a slang term for /more/
boom: a powerful, loud, and emphatic dunk shot. example: i boomed on you, man!
mo cleaning glass
mo: a slang term for /more/
cleaning glass: to rebound a basketball. originated due to the fact most backboards are made of plexiglas, and many players use big swiping motions to gather rebounds.
mo game
mo: a slang term for /more/
game: what a multi-skilled player has when he wears the nike shox vc II. its full-length shox technology provides the responsive energy you need to shake, shoot jimmys, steal cookies, drop dimes, boom and clean glass.
nike.com/nikeshox

SPORTSWATCH

Bryant matches Jordan's streak

LOS ANGELES—Kobe Bryant had 41 points Sunday to extend his remarkable streak of scoring at least 40 to nine straight games and Lead the Los Angeles Lakers over the Seattle Supersonics 106-101. Bryant equaled the best such streak of Michael Jordan, who did so early in the 1986-87 season. The only player with longer streaks of 40 or more points is Wilt Chamberlain. The NBA's fourth-leading career scorer, Chamberlain accomplished the feat in 14 straight games twice in the 1961-62 season and in 10 straight the following season. Bryant shot 13-of-34 and made 14 of 16 free throws. Complete results: Dallas 106, Washington 101 (OT); Orlando 113, New Jersey 105; Minnesota 99, Phoenix 97; Philadelphia 116, Cleveland 103; Golden State 115, Atlanta 93; Sacramento 99, New York 92; LA Lakers 106, Seattle 101. *Reuters*

Weir outlasts Howell in playoff

LOS ANGELES—Mike Weir staged another unlikely comeback, making up a seven-stroke deficit against Charles Howell III and winning the Nissan Open with a birdie on the second playoff hole. Weir closed with a 5-under 66 Sunday on the tough Riviera Country Club, then waited nearly an hour as Howell played his final seven holes in 2 over. The Canadian holed an 8-foot putt on No. 10, then claimed his second PGA Tour title in the last four weeks when Howell missed a birdie putt from 6 feet. Howell, who closed with a 73, failed to make a putt longer than 5 feet all afternoon. Tiger Woods had the best round of the day, a 6-under 65 that lifted him into a tie for fifth at 278. It was the eighth consecutive top-10 finish for Woods, dating to the British Open at Muirfield (tie for 28th). *AP*

Corp. Cup stakes Carribean Cruise

A SEVEN-NIGHT Carribean Cruise for two courtesy of Northwest Airlines and Royal Carribean International will be given away as grand raffle prize in the 15th Philippine Corporate Cup golf championship set March 4-7 at the Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio Ciy. Tournament organizer Cecil Hechanova bared that local and foreign golfers are seeing action in the event. The Camp John Hay Development Corp. is throwing its full support behind the annual project by offering very special rates to participants and their families at the luxurious John Hay Manor. Interested parties may call tele-fax 842-4556 through Mary Ann. Other sponsors are Fil-Estate, College Assurance Plans Phils., Wilson Sports, Premier Wine & Spirits, Dynamic Sports Corp., PLDT Business Solutions and Le Souffle.

Mandaluyong derby on tonight

THE HEAVYWEIGHTS of Philippine cockfighting clash at Mandaluyong Coliseum today when the "LCC Leonard 7-Cock Derby" gets under way with 67 fights on tap. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free Shampoo, Complexor 3000 and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug, Inc. "Aficionados will definitely get their money's worth because aside from the big number of fights, big-time quality fights are scheduled," said derby host Louie Cua. The National Cockers Association is spearheaded by Gov. Ito Ynares and Terence Madlambayan. Leading Ucap are *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, OPMI president Vic Yu and Ucap president Raymond Velayo. For details, please contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Sports body official airs side

THE PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee official being blamed for the Southeast Asian Games screening committee brouhaha yesterday said he was only stating what his bosses told him to say. ``There was nothing erroneous in what I said in the papers," said POC member and rowing association secretary general Nestor Ilagan, who received flak for saying that the POC only required honesty in endorsing athletes to the Vietnam SEA Games. He said the controversial statement came from Steve Hontiveros himself, the chair of the screening commission of the POC. . *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Strong start for 3 RP chessers

THREE Filipino woodpushers opened their 4th Asian men's individual campaign in Doha, Qatar, with impressive wins Sunday. GM Eugene Torre (ELO 2519), seeded 14th, outwitted Fide Master Al-zendani Zendan (ELO 2113) of Yemen; GM candidate Mark Paragua (ELO 2506), ranked 17th, subdued 43th seed Fide Master Genden Altanoch (Elo 2284) of Mongolia while 20th seed GM Bong Villamayor (Elo 2489) outmaneuvered 46th seed Janayi Zeyaad.

'Counter' demo at YMCA Makati

COUNTER Strike, the newest self-defense technique in town, will be demonstrated for the second time today at the YMCA Makati. Instructor John Havan will again provide students with new techniques against armed and unarmed attack in three seconds. Call YMCA Makati at 899-6380-82 or 895-9525 for details.

Take charge of your money

You're walking through the mall when you see this smiling woman approach you, offering a credit card membership with the inevitable come-on, "Ma'am, no annual fee on the first year!" "Fantastic! What a great deal," you say to yourself. But is it really? This may sound cynical but you've got to remember credit card companies don't give away their cards out of the goodness of their hearts.

The way to shop for a credit card is the way you shop for most things – look for the brand that gives you the most value for every peso you spend. Below is a guide that will help you find out which card actually helps you save money and take charge of your finances.

Understanding finance or interest charges

There may be times when you'll need to defer or pay only part of the total amount due on your credit card bill *(Among credit card companies, if you defer payment, you're called a revolver. If you pay the full amount, you're a transactor.)* It's standard practice among all credit cards to charge interest on the amount you defer payment on. What isn't standard is the rate. BPI Express Credit Card has the lowest at 2.9% while most of the other credit cards have interest at anywhere from 3.25% to 3.5%.

Does your credit card company charge you more interest than necessary? How is your monthly interest computed?

Choose a credit card that computes interest charges on your outstanding balance only and not on new purchases.

Here's how you can save with BPI Express Credit Cards' 2.9% interest rate computed only on the outstanding balance:

Scenario:

	Statement Date	Amount
Your Credit Limit		₱70,000.00
Outstanding Balance Last Statement	Jan. 5	₱28,500.00
Total New Purchases This Statement	Feb. 5	₱40,000.00

Transaction Date of New Purchases	No. of Days to Statement Date Feb. 5	New Transaction Amount	INTEREST COMPUTATION	
			Other credit cards (3.25% interest on new purchases)	BPI Express Credit Card (2.9% interest on new purchases)
Jan. 6	31	₱ 20,000.00	₱ 671.67	ZERO
Jan.10	27	10,000.00	292.50	ZERO
Jan.15	22	2,000.00	47.67	ZERO
Jan. 20	17	5,000.00	92.08	ZERO
Jan. 25	12	3,000.00	39.00	ZERO
Total Interest on New Purchases			₱ 1,142.92	ZERO
Interest on Outstanding Balance (₱28,500)			₱926.25	₱826.50
Total Interest			₱2,069.17	₱826.50
Amount saved for the month				₱1,242.67

So if you want to save yourself from a lot of grief and save yourself some money, choose a credit card with a low interest rate and one that computes interest based on outstanding balance, like BPI Express Credit Card.

Deferred payment vs installment-what's the difference?

Both are really just payment options you can use to help manage your cash flow. When you choose to pay only part of the total monthly bill on your credit card, you're deferring payment. Getting an item on installment means deciding from the outset that you will pay for that item over time; BPI Credit Card terms range from 3 months to 24 months with a fixed monthly interest rate.

Special Installment Plan (SIP)

You want a credit card that's really industrious about setting up year-long events and sales. And nobody beats BPI Express Credit Card when it comes to installment madness events or the range of goods and services available. Everything from appliances and travel to furniture and tuition - there's practically nothing you can't get with BPI's SIP (Special Installment Plan).

Loyalty programs

The major credit cards have loyalty programs that reward you for using your card where every purchase earns you points which you accumulate and exchange later on for a range of gift/s. The problem is most of them have incredibly high purchase requirements to get a gift. With some programs, you need a minimum of ₱120,000 to ₱160,000 worth of purchases before you can start redeeming your points for rewards. BPI's Frequent User Privileges program has the lowest purchase requirement. Every purchase worth ₱ 25 earns you 1 point. You also get a wider selection of gifts - over 400 items covering everything from leather goods, appliances, educational items, office equipment to sports gear, gift certificates, travel and more. And best of all, the points requirements for the gifts in BPI's Frequent User Privileges are a lot lower. You can start redeeming your gifts with only ₱40,000 worth of cumulative spending on your BPI Express Credit Card. It's like getting a portion of your money back whenever you purchase.

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And BPI Express Credit Card still gives you more! It's the only card accepted at Glorietta 4 parking. Simply present your card to the cashier and in one swipe you can go. And you may also enjoy bargain shopping with BPI Express Credit Card at all branches of Pilipinas Makro.

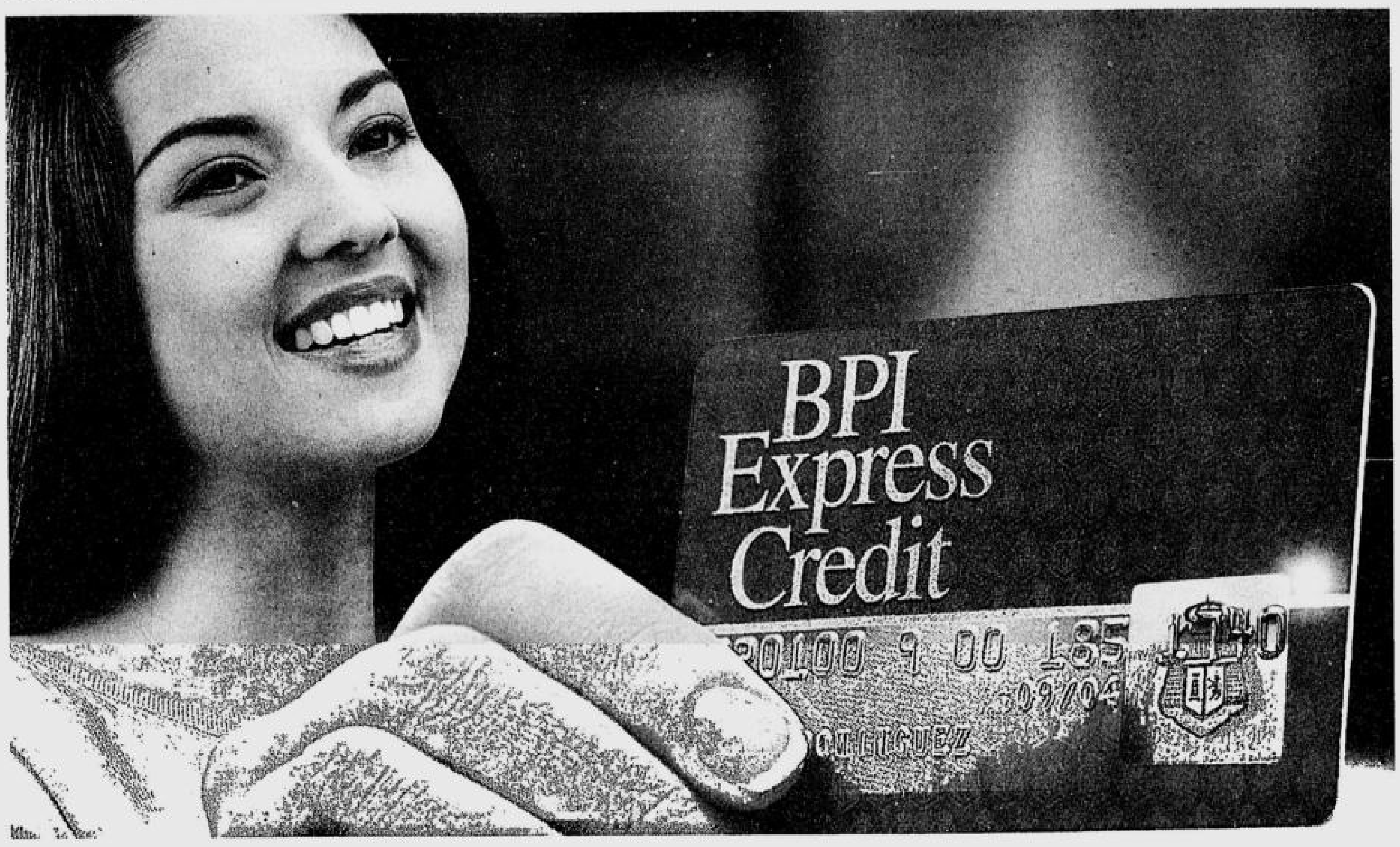
Just as important as knowing what to look for in a credit card is knowing how to properly use your credit card. As a service to its cardholders, both present and future, BPI Credit Card is pleased to provide the following card management tips.

Using your statement as a budgeting tool. There are some card users who charge all their expenses – gas, groceries, everything – to their card. According to them, the advantage of doing so is you can see where your money's going in one handy and convenient statement versus having to wade through a tabletop full of receipts.

While most card companies are obsessive-compulsive about the accuracy and veracity of their statements, it's best to **keep all the receipts of all your transactions** for reconciling with your monthly statement.

It's also prudent to compare your credit card purchases to your monthly income. In general, your **total monthly bills shouldn't exceed 50% of your monthly income.** If you want your credit history to remain good over time, you need to be prepared for unplanned expenses.

Security. Keep a record of your credit card account numbers, their expiry dates and the phone and fax numbers of their Call Centers. Be sure to keep this record in a safe place. In case you lose your card, having this record gives you extra security and helps prevent unauthorized use of your card in the quickest possible time.



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Puentevella elected Asian w'lifting head

BACOLOD Rep. Monico O. Puentevella has been elected president of the Asian Weightlifting Federation.

He was voted unanimously by 40 presidents and officials of different weightlifting associations in the region.

Puentevella, chair of the House committee on youth and sports, was named AWF head during its two-day electoral congress at the Heritage Hotel.

"This new responsibility comes at a time when there is an urgent need to forge greater cooperation, unity and harmony among weightlifting federations in the Asian region," said Puentevella, who is also the Philippine Weightlifting Association chief.

PUENTEVELLA

The election was presided over by International Weightlifting Federation president Dr. Tamas Ajan and IWF secretary general and Athens, Greece Gov. Yannis Sigorous.

The IWF officials earlier made a courtesy call to President Arroyo in Malacañang before the start of the congress.

Puentevella said that while the AWF presidency entails a lot of responsibility, the position would surely put the Philippines in the Asian weightlifting map.

Also elected were Iran's Ali Morada as secretary general, Kuwait's Naif Al Zafiri as first vice president and four other VPs namely, Chao-Kuo Chang (Taipei), Ma Wenguang (China), Turlykhanov Kairat (Kazakhstan) and Ong Poh Ang (Malaysia).

The congress also named Sakurai Katsutoshi of Japan as AWF honorary president and designated Wang Yan of China as deputy general secretary.

Marc Anthony Reyes

Did the PBA pay?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DUE to space constraints, this piece about the GAB's ultimatum to the PBA did not come out yesterday.

In that column, I wrote that the Games and Amusements Board will no longer issue another permit to the Philippine Basketball Association unless the pro league settles its long-standing tax obligation to the government agency. "We have stretched our already thin patience to the limit," said GAB chair Eduardo Villanueva, adding they have given the PBA only until Monday, Feb. 24, to pay its debt (amounting to P3,336,445.53) else the GAB revokes the league's permit for the rest of the season. According to Villanueva, the PBA was able to open on Sunday only because it was issued a one-day permit on the basis of a promissory of PBA Commissioner Noli Eala. But no permit will be forthcoming again if the league reneged on its promise to pay.

Did the PBA pay? That was the question as we go to press yesterday.

***

LIZA GALORE. Raising winning fighting cocks has been Eddie Araneta's chief concern since 1964. At age 66, Eddie is a cockerbreeder to the bone. "I love cockfighting as a sport, not as a form of gambling," he said. "And whatever modest success I have achieved in breeding is a result of total dedication and blending the right bloodlines." His favorites are the Karachi Hatch battle cocks.

Together with first cousin Bomboy who joined Team Liza Galore in 1992, Eddie Araneta raises, breeds and keeps some 1,500 cocks on cord at anytime in his main farm in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, and his second farm in Calatagan, Batangas. "Cockfighting is not a walk in the park," Eddie said.

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Helpless against fires

SUMMER'S here, can another fire be far behind?

By Alcuin Papa

AFTER the rash of city fires, more damaging blazes could be expected to hit Metro Manila in the coming days, with summer quickly setting in.

However, all that fire authorities could do was admit helplessness while issuing the seasonal warning.

The Bureau of Fire Protection yesterday admitted it was forceless and could not do anything to contain the situation.

Reason: It does not have enough men and equipment.

BFP National Capital Region fire chief Supt. Danilo Cabrera revealed that the firefighting capability of the bureau is only half its intended strength.

Cabrera bared that the present strength of the BFP in the NCR is 2,400 men and 110 firetrucks, which is far from ideal.

Of the total number of available trucks, Cabrera said only 60 to 70 are operational.

The ideal force needed to fight fires effectively was 5,000 men and 250 firetrucks, he said.

Cabrera added that the lack of equipment is due to the shortage of funds.

Since the start of this month, the metropolis has been hit by a rash of fires in different areas. Cabrera explained this as part of the season. "This early, summer is already coming in, a few more days and it will March, the Fire Prevention Month,"he noted.

They could not do anything about it, Cabrera said.

But Alvin Estrada, spokesperson of the United Firefighters of the Phils Inc., a nationwide organization of firefighters, yesterday blamed "incompetent" BFP officials for doing nothing to bring down the number of fires in the metropolis.

"Instead of improving the situation over the years, it has deteriorated. At present, the BFP has no capability to meet the situation. They have not taken into consideration the new landscape of the city with the congestion of people and structures," he explained.

Estrada told the INQUIRER that fires have hit the city this month "almost on a daily basis."

The situation in Metro Manila is definitely alarming, he said.

He added that the BFP has not taken steps over the years to improve its firefighting capability. "The firefighting capability is outdated. So we expect a lot of property to be lost this year,"Estrada said.

The proliferation of high-rise buildings in the city, he noted, also poses a problem for the BFP.

"At its present state, the BFP has no capability to fight fires that strike in high-rises," he said.

On the other hand, Cabrera noted that the outbreak of fires in the city this year may not be as alarming as in the past year.

"This year, there is no more El Niño. So we expect the number of fires will be lower than last year," he said.

The BFP NCR chief said there were a total of 281 fires that hit Metro Manila last month. This, he said, represented a drop in the number of fires for the same period last year.

In January 2002, Metro Manila was hit with 424 fires.

Cabrera could not give any figures for the current month as they have yet to compile the numbers.

Cabrera stressed that, despite the weather and their lack of manpower and equipment, the BFP-NCR is still "addressing the problem" of fighting fires in the city.

He also noted the high number of volunteer brigades who can help out during fire alerts.

He also advised Metro Manila residents to be wary with their household appliances and open flames as these are the major causes of fires.

"We advise our residents to be aware and vigilant of their environment, especially materials that could be causes of fires," he said.

Tight guarding at Edsa rites

By Dona Pazzibugan

NEVER again. Deputy director-general Reynaldo Velasco, chief of the PNP-National Capital Region, yesterday said no protester would be allowed at the Edsa Shrine in today's 17th anniversary celebration of the 1986 People Power.

Some 600 policemen will be deployed in the area to prevent a repeat of the incident during the Edsa 2 anniversary last month when a group of protesters got past the phalanx of policemen by riding a bus traveling over the Edsa flyover. The protesters got off and chanted slogans as President Macapagal-Arroyo was delivering a speech inside the Edsa Shrine.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Corazon Aquino and other figures in Edsa 1 will hear Mass at the Edsa Shrine at noon today to mark the historic event that culminated with ouster of Ferdinand Marcos.

"That was a minor lapse. That would not happen again," Velasco said in an interview in Malacañang yesterday.

He said he would post 500 to 600 policemen from the Edsa Shrine to the nearby People Power Monument to block protesters from getting near during the Mass.

Police forces would also be deployed at the traditional rally sites around Metro Manila, he added.

"We always assume the worst scenario," said Velasco, who briefed Palace officials about their security plans for today.

Coding ends Friday

IT'S official. The experiment on the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program will end on Friday.

This was announced by Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, who said the MMDA would no longer implement the experiment from March 3 to 7 when the number coding scheme was supposed to be in force on both private and public utility vehicles.

He told the INQUIRER that when the MMDA's experiment this week—where the UVVRP is imposed exclusively on all private vehicles—ends on Friday, the MMDA would conduct an evaluation of all the data gathered and then present these to the Metro Manila Council for the final decision.

The picture shaping up from the experiment is that the traffic flow was lightest last week, when the UVVRP was imposed exclusively on public utility vehicles, said Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel De Dios.

Last week's traffic situation was a far cry from the congestion experienced during the first week of the experiment beginning Feb. 3, when the number coding scheme was suspended in the whole metropolis save for Makati city. The trial suspension was supposed to have ended on Feb. 21, but the MMDA asked for an extension.

Leila Salaverria

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FEB 25 TUESDAY

Faith healer disappears after molesting 20 boys

By Philip Tubeza

POLICE are hunting down a faith healer who allegedly raped more than 20 high school male students from July up to this month in Sta. Ana, Manila.

The suspect was identified as Rizalino Leonor, 38, of 2359 Interior Tejeron St. Sta, Manila, records at the Western Police District-Children and Women's Desk showed.

The victims, aged 13 to 17, had either been threatened with a curse or with bodily harm to be inflicted by other boys if they resisted or refused the suspect's advances.

Eight students have filed official complaints before the WPD but they said their number could exceed 20.

One victim exposed the suspect's sexual scheme: First, he would have one student introduce the victims to him; then the culprit would invite his prey to his house. There, Leonor would allegedly force the victim to undress before he would perform oral sex on him.

"He threatened to choke me when I refused," one victim said.

Leonor would also allegedly force the boys to perform oral sex on him.

"He also threatened to have spirits go after us," a victim said.

The latest abuse, committed on Feb. 13, was only exposed on Wednesday after one of the victims confessed to his mother.

The victim's grades had started to deteriorate because of Rizalino's sexual abuses. Alarmed, the victim's mother next confronted school authorities and they later reported the incident to the police.

However, the faith healer has suddenly vanished.

He was last seen near his house on Saturday.

Zuno orders panel to start Strunk extradition process

By Michael Lim Ubac

CHIEF State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuno ordered yesterday a justice department panel to start proceedings for the extradition of Roger Lawrence Strunk, principal accused in the murder of movie actress Nida Blanca.

"I have given instructions to the panel chair, (Senior State Prosecutor) Archimedes Manabat, and panel member Mark Jalandoni to prepare the petition for extradition,"

Zuno said in a news briefing.

Zuno issued the order after Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 156 Judge Alex Quiroz issued the arrest warrant against Strunk on Friday.

The warrant was issued a few hours after Strunk's lawyer sought the junking of the murder case in a 73-page motion to dismiss the case.

"I understand that (State Prosecutor) Jalandoni has now a copy of the warrant of arrest. Tomorrow we will start (preparing) the documents and the petition for extradition."

To be attached to the "request letter are the resolution, warrant of arrest, information, sworn statements of the witnesses and the photograph of Strunk," said Zuno.

He, however, said that the panel's role was limited to preparing the documents.

It would be the Department of Justice legal department that would "initiate the appropriate actions."

He said that the legal department would be preparing the referral letter addressed to Justice Undersecretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez who, in turn, would formally ask the United States federal government to extradite Strunk, a resident of the state of California.

2 from Ongpin fall in drug bust

TWO residents of Chinatown have been arrested by drug enforcement agents while in possession of a kilo of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu in Mandaluyong City on Sunday.

Any Cruz Lee and Michael Ang, both residents of 815 Ongpin St. in Manila, were arrested by police operatives who posed as buyers.

The two showed up at the parking lot of a large mall in Mandaluyong where lawmen announced the bust while the drug deal was in progress.

Drug trafficking is a crime punishable by death in the Philippines. *Martin Marfil*

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Manila court rules against Atienza man

By Philip Tubeza

A MANILA Regional Trial Court recently invalidated the rules governing the election of a Manila Barangay League president—one of two contesting a seat in the Manila City Council.

Judge Reynaldo Ros, of Manila RTC Branch 33, invalidated Manila ordinance 8039, which Carlos Castañeda used to justify his election as barangay league president.

Ros said the ordinance contravened the Local Government Code.

Rosa noted that under the government code, the barangay league chief should be "elected directly" by all barangay chairs.

But under the Manila ordinance, each of the city's six congressional districts was allowed to have a chapter representative and they would elect among themselves the league president.

The court also questioned why, under the Manila ordinance, the league president could sit in the city council only during his term as league president. In the past, the league president could sit in the city council until the end of his term as barangay chair.

The conflict on what rules to follow has led to Manila having two league presidents—Castañeda, who is supported by the majority in the city council, and Natalio Beltran III, who has the support of the minority.

Beltran sought the court's help and his position was also supported by the Office of the Solicitor General.

On Friday, the court ruled in Beltran's favor.

Named respondents in the case were Castañeda, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, the city legal officer, and the OSG.

Coed's dream of becoming a doctor dashed in UP crash

By Alcuin Papa

AS PRECIOUS Baldo lay dying at the the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, her mother Nancy laid one of her daughter's favorite paintings by her bedside.

It was a portrait done by one of Precious' preteen students whom the late coed taught how to paint.

Precious died on Saturday night, four days after she was hit by an alleged drunken driver of a BMW in front of a dormitory on the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

Precious had one more year to go in college, after which she would have graduated with honors.

"She was a happy child and had so many plans, so many dreams," said Nancy Baldo, 46, at her daughter's wake at the UP Chapel. "She wanted to become a lawyer or a doctor."

A graduate of the science high school of the Benguet State University, Precious excelled in science, Nancy said. But Precious wanted to take up fine arts or architecture in college.

"But I told her to think it over because we aren't rich," Nancy said.

Precious' father Bernard, 54, works as a meter reader, her mother is a vegetable dealer.

Nancy said she managed to persuade Precious to give up fine arts, but her daughter continued to paint. In her spare time, Precious would teach Grade 2 children how to paint.

In college, Precious took up chemistry, with the hope of becoming a doctor.

"Later she told me that it was difficult to maintain her grades," Nancy said. "So she shifted to philosophy. But she still took up some chemistry units because she was still thinking of entering medical school."

Nancy remembered one of the last conversations she had with her daughter. The mother did not know it at first, but their conversation foreshadowed Precious' fate.

"She told me that many things may happen to anyone in one day, and one of these is death." Nancy said looking sadly at her daughter's white casket. "I just laughed it off."

On Tuesday, Richard Ong was driving a black BMW when he crashed into a group of students waiting for a concert to start in front of the Kamia Residence Hall.

Ong, who was found to have high alcohol content in his blood when he was tested, had been charged with reckless imprudence resulting in physical injuries and damage to property.

With the death of Precious, Ong could be facing additional charges of homicide.

Ong posted bail of P15,000 and was released last Friday.

At the moment, Nancy is not thinking of settling with the Ong family. "Money can't replace what we have lost."

Last night, the Baldo family took Precious' remains back to their house in Trinidad, Benguet.

"(Precious) had relatives and friends who would want to see her before she is buried," Nancy said.

The interment is scheduled for Friday.

PRECIOUS, 20, had one more year to go in college, after which she would have graduated with honors, according to her mother Nancy at her daughter's wake in UP Diliman.

DENNIS SABANGAN

Massive rally at NBP averted

By Christian Esguerra

PRISON guards foiled what could have been a massive rally of inmates at the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa yesterday morning.

NBP men, on orders of Bureau of Corrections Director Ricardo Macala, seized and destroyed streamers and placards which inmates had prepared in support of influential prisoner ex-Misamis Occidental town mayor Rey Yap.

Gang leaders and members were threatened with expulsion to faraway colonies should they proceed with the rally at the maximum security compound at around 8 a.m. yesterday, according to a prison insider.

Macala yesterday confirmed that he had given such orders but "only to take the spotlight away from me."

"I didn't want to give my critics another chance to hit me," he said. "I didn't want them to think that I'd mobilized these people just to improve my public image."

In the seized placards, the inmates praised the prisons director for heeding their plea and taking Yap out of the disciplinary chamber last week.

Yap, who is serving a life term for masterminding the murder of a political rival in 1992, spent two weeks in the chamber after police allegedly seized around P300,000 in counterfeit money from his maximum security cell.

The NBP source said inmates were dismayed by Macala's actions because they had supposedly prepared well for the rally.

Yap's sympathizers outside of the NBP had burned the lines in inviting media to cover the event, the insider said.

Gang members had also been properly briefed on how to go about the rally upon receiving cues from their leaders, the source added.

Macala said there was no need for another show of support for Yap because he had already released the moneyed inmate from the punishment cell.

He said he issued the order after Yap's blood pressure shot up last week.

Recalling Cory Aquino's leadership

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

RETIRED Col. Hector Tarrazona, in a page 1 article yesterday in the INQUIRER, said that the original RAM (Reform the AFP Movement) perceived the administration of President Cory Aquino to be pro-communist.

Why? Because, according to Tarrazona, she did not consult the military in her decision to release prominent communists, such as Jose Ma Sison, from detention. This was the reason for the coup attempts in 1987 and 1989, said Tarrazona, a former RAM official.

Cory Aquino did not consult the military in decisions affecting the security of the state because she was bitter about the assassination of her husband, Sen. Benigno Aquino, and his incarceration during martial law.

* * *

Had she been forgiving toward the military, her family's former enemy, she would have forgotten the bitter past.

Her magnanimity toward the military would have generated cooperation from the establishment that was responsible for installing her in Malacañang.

But Tita Cory was no Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he became an overseer in Japan after World War II. MacArthur was magnanimous in victory.

Ironically, Tita Cory is a devout Roman Catholic, a religion that teaches forgiveness as a virtue.

* * *

Not only did Ms Aquino consort with the communists, she also resurrected the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) that was already losing steam when she took over from Marcos.

She had Nur Misuari, MNLF chieftain, brought back from exile against the advice of the military. At that time Misuari had been forgotten by his followers.

In short, Ms Aquino re-installed Misuari as MNLF leader.

Had she followed her military advisers, instead of some publicity- conscious politicians, the government would only have had the sole problem of tackling the problem of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

* * *

Moro political leaders warn American soldiers they may get killed joining Filipino troops hunting down notorious Abu Sayyaf terrorists in Sulu.

What do those Moro politicians take the American GIs for, a bunch of babes in the woods?

Every soldier, whether American or not, knows that when he's sent into combat there's a possibility he might not come back home to his family.

* * *

The Moro politicians say that the Tausugs, the Muslims of Sulu, have not forgotten the massacre of over a thousand Tausugs by American soldiers in 906.

That statement is non sequitur. It's so irrelevant and idiotic it should not have been made at all.

It's just like saying that the Filipinos of this generation have not forgotten the atrocities committed by the Japanese soldiers against their parents and grandparents during World War II.

* * *

Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico is right. The Macapagal administration should exclude Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser for special concerns, from any renewed negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Gonzales has not been successful in his talks with the MILF. He has even emboldened the Moro rebels by trying to placate them.

If you placate a Moro, he will take it as a sign of weakness.

To a lot of people, Gonzales looks like a weakling. I won't elaborate. A government negotiator should exude confidence.

* * *

The loudmouthed peace advocates say that the Macapagal administration was wrong in waging a war against the MILF.

Many people in Luzon, especially those who haven't been to Mindanao, agree with them.

But Mindanaoans-excluding the Muslims, of course-back the government's iron-fist policy in dealing with Moro predators, the MILF and the Abu Sayyaf.

* * *

The people of Mindanao know the situation better than those in Luzon.

They know about the atrocities committed by Muslim rebels and bandits against civilians. That's why they're cheering on the government troops.

The people of Mindanao don't want the peace advocates in Luzon to talk in their behalf.

* * *

Mayor Jojo Zapanta of Taytay, Rizal, was sentenced to a maximum of 20 months in prison by the Sandiganbayan for arbitrarily detaining Simeon Osum, an 80-year-old laborer, in June 2000.

Zapanta should have been given a stiffer penalty. He's a very abusive mayor.

He's one reason why the power to hire and fire policemen should not be given back to the mayors.

* * *

Zapanta employs armed goons that have terrorized the small town in Rizal near Metro Manila.

He calls his goons Maidtaf, for Municipal Anti-Illegal Drug Task Force.

But Maidtaf is just an excuse for the mayor to show that his power over his constituents.

Maidtaf goons beat up people at the drop of a pin. I know of an incident where the mayor's goons shot dead a man whom they suspected of being a drug pusher. But they didn't catch him in the act. The victim was riding on a motorcycle with his girlfriend riding in tandem when he was shot.

Jon-jon needs a transplant

ERNESTO "Jon-jon" Miranda Jr. was supposed to get a kidney transplant from his sister last year. But unfortunately, tests showed that her kidney did not match his body.

Now, his mother Amelia is willing to donate one of her kidneys for Jon-jon to survive.

Jon-jon's kidneys are no longer working.

But the family needs the financial help of INQUIRER readers for the tests and the actual operation.

"I thank all those who have helped us, but my son still needs your help," Ernesto Sr. said. "I am asking First Gentleman Mike Arroyo to please help us."

The "work-up" tests that would determine if Amelia's kidney would match Jon-jon cost P80,000, he said.

Jon-jon must also undergo hemodialysis thrice a week.

Each dialysis session costs P1,700. Jon-jon also takes medication worth P1,900 twice a week, his father said.

Ernesto Sr. continues to work in a Mandaluyong printing press, while his daughter works as an employee in a bank in Makati.

Jon-jon took up electronic mechanical engineering but he had to stop schooling in January 2002 after his condition took a turn for the worse.

Those who are willing to help can call Jon-jon's parents at 289-3701. His sister's cell phone number is 0919-459-9810. *Philip Tubeza*

Man with a grudge behind killing of sisters in Makati, cops claim

By Leila Salaverria

POLICE believe that a man with an old grudge was behind the killing of the Mejos sisters in Makati last month.

According to police sources, the suspect was not a professional killer and probably did not really intend to kill sisters Teresita, 28, and Juliet Mejos, 24, in the first place.

The suspect's anger at the victims probably got the better of him, and when he confronted the two about it, things turned ugly.

Sources said this is the likely scenario behind the fate of the sisters, who were found dead inside their house on Reyes Street, Barangay del Pilar, Makati City on Jan. 29.

The bodies were discovered in different parts of the house.

Items of clothing were wrapped around their necks, indicating that these were used to strangle them.

One of the sisters' faces was almost completely covered over with duct tape.

Several pieces of jewelry were also missing and one room of the house was in total disarray.

Initially, probers believed robbery was the motive behind the killing.

But further investigation showed that a personal motive on the suspect's part may be involved because, if the suspect were a professional criminal, he would have brought a weapon with him.

Since the suspect used the victims' clothes to strangle them, he might just have been forced to kill the two.

Police refuse to divulge details that would lead to the suspect's identity for fear of jeopardizing the investigation.

Hundreds stranded in Malolos strike

HUNDREDS of commuters in Malolos City and other towns of Bulacan were stranded on Monday after more than 6,000 tricycle and jeepney drivers went on strike to protest the implementation of the smoke emission tests under the Clean Air Act.

The strike coincided with the annual "Ulat sa Bayan" remarks of Gov. Josefina de la Cruz at the Centro Escolar University in Malolos.

Fedy de Leon, spokesperson of the Dyipni Tricycle Bulacan Transport Organization, said many of their members failed to renew their vehicles' registrations after they failed the smoke emission test.

He said the non-refundable P300 testing fee was wasted when many of them failed to pass the test. He said they needed to pay an additional P150 for each test until their vehicles pass the standards set under the Clean Air Act.

"They should not blame us for failing the test," de Leon said in Filipino. "We bought these motorcycles for our livelihood and their manufacturers should be punished for producing engines that pollute the air."

Bulacan Rep. Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado said Land Transportation Office chief Roberto Lastimoso had assured him that drivers and operators of vehicles that failed the smoke emission tests would be given three months to comply with the provisions of the Clean Air Act. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

PNP crime lab hit for delaying bank rob probe

By Leila Salaverria

A RANKING investigator overseeing the Parañaque Prudential Bank robbery case on Saturday hit the slow procedures at the Philippine National Police's crime laboratory, and said that it was hindering the crime probe.

The police officer, who requested anonymity, said the Parañaque police were forced to release six suspects in the bank robbery because the fingerprint matching procedure done at Camp Crame took over a week to produce results.

"The case is actually solved," said the investigator. "But we cannot do otherwise and not release the six suspects."

He said the fingerprints of the six suspects had to be matched with the fingerprints lifted from the getaway vehicle recovered so that the police would be able to establish a solid case against the suspects.

He added that the fingerprint matching was necessary in the case because witnesses had been unable to identify the six as among those who stormed a Prudential Bank branch in Parañaque.

"The fingerprint matching procedure takes a long time," the prober said. "The results would be released only this week."

The six suspects—Fidel Tipo, 44, Reynaldo Bacolod, 49, Rodolfo Amistoso, 48, Rodolfo Leyte, 64, Arnel Ramirez, 36 and Alvin Aranas, 22—were rounded up on Feb. 17, several days after the early morning heist. They were released later when witnesses failed to identify them.

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph

People, Events & Products

Editor Aries Espinosa
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Supply Link 2003 full blast

IN ORDER to promote the importance of supply chain management and consolidate the network of suppliers in the country, the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (Pism) will hold the Supply Link 2003 conference and exhibit from Feb. 26 to 28 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City. The theme for this year's conference is "Taking the Supply Chain to New Heights."

Miraluz Tan, Pism first vice president, said "Supply Link 2003" offers the entrepreneur and the business organization a chance to enhance their capabilities by giving skills and technical know in SCM (Supply Link Chain management) to be able to survive in a competitive environment. Furthermore, she said the annual event provides a chance to all supply chain management (SCM) practitioners and suppliers to explore business opportunities in the future.

"The objective of the conference is to uplift the SCM profession and keep the practitioners updated on the last practices and trends. Pism would also like members to keep pace with rapid developments in the sector," she said.

Tan said the importance of an efficient supply chain is gaining importance in the Philippines. In the current competitive environment, she said many Philippine companies have embraced the importance of an efficient supply chain in the success of their business operations. "Right now, many companies have elevated the status of a supply chain manager into the executive level," she said. "SCM has shown tremendous improvements over the past years. It has improved dramatically in scope and function in the operations of business," she added.

There will be four technical sessions in the three-day event. The sessions will focus on strategic approach to supply chain management, supplier synergies and supply manager's tools.

Exhibits will focus on materials handling and storage, transportation and distribution, raw materials, packaging and information technology.

Pism, comprised of more than 250 member companies belonging to the top 1000 corporations in the country, continues to serve its members by creating training programs that focus on new trends and communicating with the communication with the government. Pism, a non-profit organization, conducts general membership meetings and industry group fora ever quarter of the year. It has helped increase the Filipinos' awareness about the importance and contribution of the profession not only to the private industry but to the government and academic sectors as well.

For further details on Supply Link 2003, please call 634-6632; 638-4024; 634-5942; 6345955; 634-6348 (fax).

assenger Seat"
STEPHEN SPEAKS
AUTOGRAPH SIGNING
2003
wider ran
music

STEPHEN SPEAKS VISITS O MUSIC VIDEO

The popular band Stephen Speaks recently went to O Music Video to sign autographs for their numerous fans. The band, which is based in the US flew here especially for its Filipino fans due to its immense popularity. Shown are the band and O Music Video's Richard Francisco (marketing manager) and Jojo Pascual (marketing associate). Their album is now available in O Music Video.

PDA, APDF EXTENDS REGISTRATION PERIOD

The 53rd National Dental Health Week kicked off last Feb. 3 with a thanksgiving mass and an open house at the Philippine Dental Association building. It was also announced that registration period for the 95th PDA Annual Convention and Scientific Session and the 25th Asia Pacific Dental Congress is extended until Feb. 28. This is to give dental practitioners from all over the country the chance to participate in what is billed to be a landmark scientific convention which will be held from April 24 to May 1 at the Philippine International Convention Center. Registration fee is P4,000 with on-site registration pegged at P5,000. Gracing the opening of the 53rd National Dental Health Week were (from left): Dr. Primo E. Gonzales, PDA past president; Dr. Jesus C. Tumaneng, president-elect of APDF; Dr. Luis D. Uy, PDA president; Dr. Arsenio C. Donesa, president-elect for 95th PDA Annual Convention; Dr. Oliver Hennedige, former secretary general APDF and current secretary general of ICCDE and Dr. Diampo Lim, general chair , 25th APDC.

Armstrong is top burger in Makro

ARMSTRONG burger is once again the No. 1 top seller of burger patties in Makro chain of stores for the year 2002. Armstrong burgers achieved the No. 1 position in 1997 and has not relinquished the top post since then. According to the records of Makro, Armstrong accounts for 71 percent of their total burger patty sales last year.

Armstrong upholds its leadership in the burger patty segment with the widest array to choose from. Its best sellers are the classic hamburger enhanced with fresh celery, garlic and onion, the chorizo burger with hamonado flavor, and the teriyaki chicken burger. Aside from the regular size patties, Armstrong has the popular bigger sized steakburgers. And Armstrong is the first and only one in the market with kiddie sized miniburgers which can be used with the pandesal.

With its dominating leadership in the 9-chain Makro stores, Armstrong has definitely captured the market for burgers among the value conscious fast food and restaurant owners, caterers and housewives. Even the healthy conscious will appreciate the low fat, no preservative formulation of all Armstrong burger variants.

With its proven quality and taste, Armstrong burgers also became the top seller in other outlets where it was made available after its success at Makro. Armstrong burgers and other Armstrong processed meat products are now conveniently available at all SM, Big R, Ever and Shopwise supermarkets.

For inquiries, call tel. no. 838-4705 or 838-3340, fax to 838-4746, or write to Armstrong Foods Corp., Mangosteen Road, FTI, Taguig, Metro Manila.

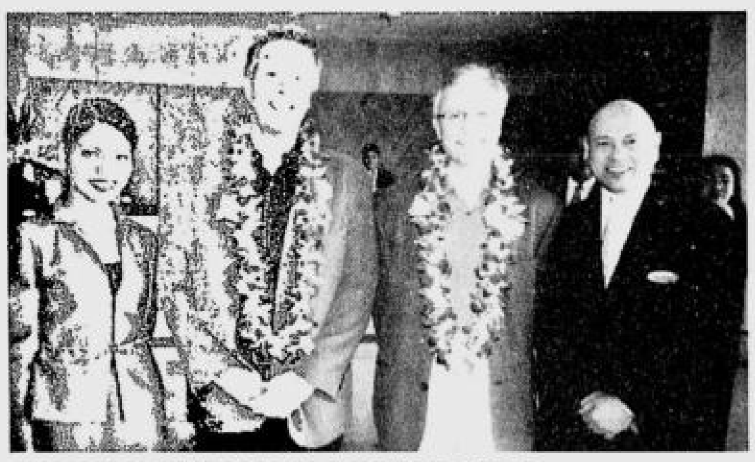
SAFETY SCHOOL TOP MAN IS TOP MARKSMAN

Police director Ramsey L. Ocampo, president of Philippine Public Safety College (PPSC), receives a Marksmanship Badge for firearms proficiency from CPNP police director General Hermogenes E. Ebdane Jr. At left is police chief superintendent Jose Gutierrez, director, Southern Police District.

8310 Raffle PROMO

MSV DRAW

DTI director Arnaldo del Rosario (second from left) is seen with Bookware Publishing Corporation staffers Ellen Lambinicio, Dottie Pineda, Malou Medina and Hazel Velas during the recent monthly draw of the 'Nokia 8310 raffle promo' held at the company's offices in Pasig City. For the readers of My Special Valentine (MSV) pocketbooks, its lucky winner is Recille Clarin of Tarlac. The promo lasts up to the end of February. For inquiries, call 631-8893-94.



THE BELLEVUE MANILA IN ALABANG

The Bellevue Manila, the first full service business hotel in Alabang, recently opened its doors and welcomed its first guest, Mr Richard Foltz. Mr Foltz is the regional director-Asean of SCA Hygiene Products. Photo shows the hotel's director of sales Myra Miranda; Mr Richard Foltz; Mr Olle Carlbark, SCA Hygiene Products' R&D manager - Asean; and The Bellevue Manila's general manager Jesse Chevrez. For reservations and inquiries, call The Bellevue Manila at 771-8181.

Bits & Clips

What tax on inheritance?

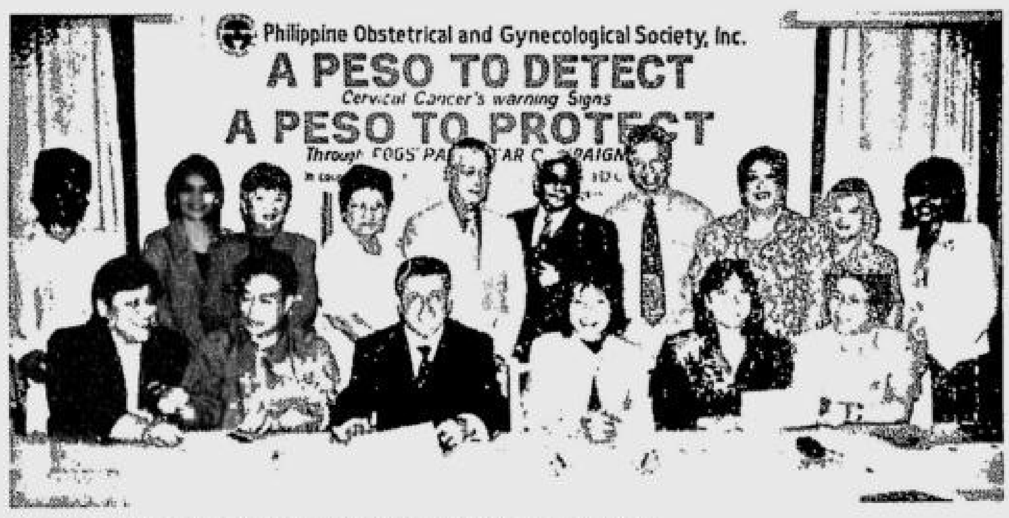
HAVE you inherited properties? Or will you be leaving inheritance to your loved ones? Now, you can find out how much taxes will be paid by you or your heirs and the requirements for the settlement of your inheritance. The AM Management Institute of Taxation (Ammit) will be holding a seminar on "Tax on Your Inheritance and Estate Planning" to answer your questions on inheritance and how to plan your estate. The seminar will be held on Feb. 26 at the 22nd Floor, Penthouse, BA-Lepanto Building, Paseo de Roxas Avenue, Makati City, 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Interested parties can call Ammit (5th Floor, Dona Guadalupe Building, 7462 Bagtikan Street, Makati City) at 895-5909/890-8276, or fax 890-8208.

AIM, Papscu conference

THE ASIAN Institute of Management (AIM) has partnered with the Philippine Association of Private Schools, Colleges, and Universities (Papscu) in conducting the Papscu National Conference at the SGV Hall of the AIM Conference Center Manila on Feb. 26. The theme of the conference is "Private Education at the Crossroads." The conference is another shared endeavor between AIM and Papscu in the development of the AIM Education Management Program. The two organizations have collaborated to make private education relevant, accessible, and sustainable, and to nurture private school owners, executives, and administrators as excellent educators. The Conference is a strengthening of this alliance and a part of the 35th anniversary celebrations of AIM. Call Yam dela Cruz at 892-4011 loc. 371, or fax 867-2114.

Buying, financing 1st home

A 2-DAY seminar on "Buying and Financing Your First Home" is being conducted by the Urban Institute of Real Estate. The first day was on Feb. 20. The second day is on Feb. 27, 1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Max's Restaurant, Level 4, Robinsons Metro East, Marcos Highway, Dela Paz, Pasig City. First time buyers will be guided away from common mistakes and frauds and guide them towards a pleasant experience of buying and financing their first dream homes by removing uncertainties and gaining essential knowledge. For more details, call 681-0928 or e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.


Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society, Inc.
A PESO TO DETECT
Cervical Cancer's warning Signs
A PESO TO PROTECT

POGS SIGNS MOA WITH SANOFI-SYNTHELABO

The Philippine Obstetrical and Gynecological Society (Pogs) recently renewed its partnership with Sanofi-Synthelabo Philippines, the country's fastest growing major pharmaceutical company, with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement to jointly undertake a Pap Smear Screening project to help fight cervical cancer. Through free pap smear screening activities nationwide, Pogs and Sanofi-Synthelabo aim to raise awareness on the importance of early detection to curb the incidence of cervical cancer. In photo are (from left): Pogs PRO Dr. Ditas Decena; Pogs VP Dr. Rosendo Roque; Sanofi-Synthelabo president Peter Dolinsky; Pogs president Dr. Lyra Ruth Clemente-Chua; Pogs secretary Dr. Blanca de Guia; and Pogs treasurer Dr. Sylvia Carnero. (Standing, from left) board members of Pogs - Drs. Virgilio Castro, Mayumi Bismark, Mildred Pareja, Rogelio Mendiola, Gil Gonzales, and Evelyn Palaypayon, and Cora Roque, secretary of Pogs.

ProductFILES

Kangara, Aussie's super juice now in the Philippines

KANGARA All - Natural Carrot Juice, also known as Australia's "super juice" is now available in the Philippines. Made from Down Under's freshest and finest fruit and vegetables, Kangara has no artificial color, flavors or additives just like freshly extracted juices. It is high in anti-carcinogen properties and therefore helps avoid cancer. Also, beta-carotene is considered as an anti-oxidant that can prevent deterioration of cells. Kangara All Natural Carrot Juice is also high in potassium, sodium, calcium and magnesium. It is regarded as a digestion stimulant, a mild diuretic and liver cleanser, and helps break down excess fats and cholesterol in the liver.

Kangara is available in six variants: carrot juice and a dash of lemon; apple and carrot juice; carrot and apricot juice; tomato, carrot and celery juice; and orange, carrot and ginger juice. It comes in an elegant and reusable 1 liter glass bottle.

Premium Kangara Quality Products have been cited in the 2003 South Australian Premiers Food Award for Excellence in Horticulture, which is one of Australia's most prestigious food awards.

Don't get left behind in the race. For as long as you are in the habit of grabbing your morning beverages to start your day, make it Kangara All Natural Carrot Juice. Kangara Juice is available in all leading supermarkets nationwide and in Puregold Duty-Free Clark and Subic.

Rediscover Pizza Hut's Stuffed Crust Pizza

IT WAS called the pizza event of the year and rightly so.

When Pizza Hut first launched the Stuffed Crust Pizza it took the country by storm and took the meaning of pizza innovation to another level. For who would have thought that the ordinary pizza could ever be eaten backwards? Only the world's leader in the pizza restaurant industry could have come up with something that wasn't only delicious but exciting, unique and fun as well.

Pizza Hut's Stuffed Crst Pizza was definitely unconventional. It was - and remains to be - the only pizza in the world that has a cheese stuffing in the crust. It was definitely meant to be eaten backwards.

There was only one catch. The Stuffed Crust Pizza was only available in family size, perfect for four but quite a lot for people in two's. So, for the year 2003, Pizza Hut offers it customers Stuffed Crust in a size that is now good for two. No more pleading with friends or your officemates to join you at Pizza Hut. You can now enjoy it on your own or with someone special for that more intimate lunch or dinner.

The craze over the Stuffed Crust Pizza is, of course, its traditional pizza crust filled with a string of imported mozzarella and baked until the cheese melts throughout the crust.

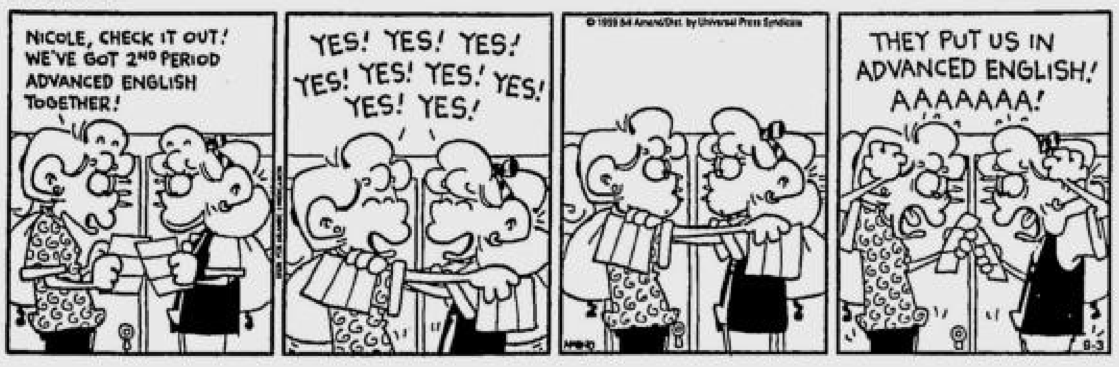
The Stuffed Crust and its two varieties, the Cheesy Crust and Double Stuffed Crust, have a sweeter savory sauce that is made with vine-ripened tomatoes, just like all Pizza Hut sauces, and is topped with an abundance of high quality toppings on freshly-made dough.

The Cheesy Crust is a favorite of real cheese fans with its cheese on the inside, outside and top. For those who want a meaty bite, Double Stuffed Crust is stuffed with the creamy mozzarella cheese and pepperoni slices in its crust.

So head to any Pizza Hut Restaurant and rediscover the Stuffed Crust Pizza, the fun pizza to eat backwards, crust first. The Stuffed Crust Pizza is another product of Pizza Hut's tradition of high quality, product innovation and consumer value.

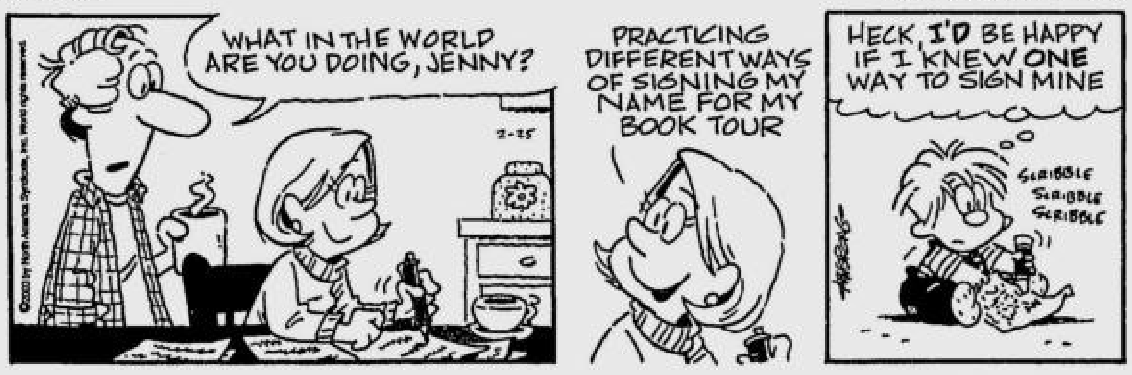
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


NICOLE, CHECK IT OUT! WE'VE GOT 2ND PERIOD ADVANCED ENGLISH TOGETHER!
YES! YES! YES! YES! YES! YES! YES! YES! YES!
THEY PUT US IN ADVANCED ENGLISH! AAAAAAA!

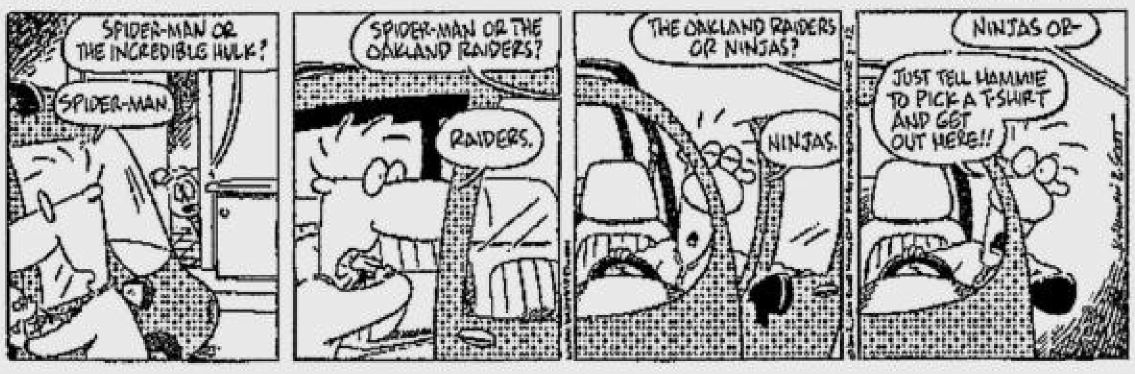
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING, JENNY?
PRACTICING DIFFERENT WAYS OF SIGNING MY NAME FOR MY BOOK TOUR
HECK, I'D BE HAPPY IF I KNEW ONE WAY TO SIGN MINE
SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE
2-25

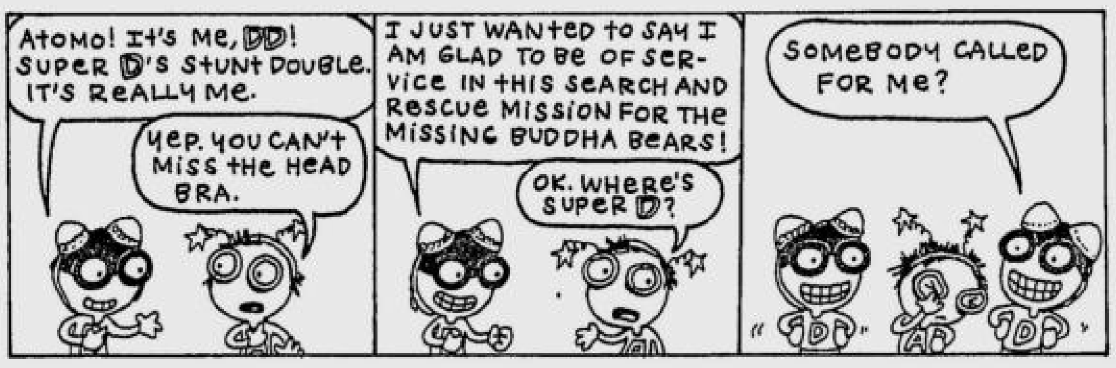
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


SPIDER-MAN OR THE INCREDIBLE HULK?
SPIDER-MAN.
SPIDER-MAN OR THE OAKLAND RAIDERS?
RAIDERS.
THE OAKLAND RAIDERS OR NINJAS?
NINJAS.
NINJAS OR-
JUST TELL HAMMIE TO PICK A T-SHIRT AND GET OUT HERE!!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Atomo! It's me, DD! Super D's stunt double. It's really me.
Yep. You can't miss the head bra.
I just wanted to say I am glad to be of service in this search and rescue mission for the missing Buddha Bears!
OK. Where's Super D?
Somebody called for me?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are dynamic and interesting. You have the ability to arouse emotions in others. You are also a humanitarian and will work to benefit humankind. You are empathetic and sensitive. Privately, you are quiet. This year, all relationships improve enormously. Expect more fun and social activities in your life!
Birthdate of: Tony Randall, actor; Johnny Cash, singer; Buffalo Bill Cody, frontiersman.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Juicy gossip about or from a friend could titillate you today. This is definitely a day when secrets can come to light. Act as if these were your own secrets.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Discussions with bosses about resources, budgets and support reveal helpful news. You'll be encouraged to know that some kind of financial or practical assistance is available now.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You want to get to the core of the truth about something related to academics, publishing or foreign countries. You don't want superficial explanations. You want to know the facts.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Today is a good day to study subjects pertaining to deeper knowledge, such as psychology, astrology or methods to regenerate yourself. You want to get to the bottom of something.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your love of mystery gives you a desire to solve puzzles, read whodunits or see crime movies. You want to be entertained by secrets and adventurous questions.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You are strongly convinced about something having to do with a family member today. You have bright ideas about how to improve things or fix something that needs to be repaired.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Playful flirtations intrigue you today. They could take place where you work or someplace that has a financial atmosphere. You could learn a valuable truth.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Discussions with family members are very important today. Others are willing to lay their cards on the table. Now you know exactly where you stand.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today you might be able to teach others a valuable truth that you have learned. This could involve improving your appearance or your health. You might show others how to look or feel better.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Secret tips and back-room deals might affect you financially today. Good ideas could come to you that ultimately boost your income in the future.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have a strong desire to penetrate the surface of reality today. Your drive to discover the truth about something is strong. A friend can help you do this.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day to study philosophical or religious subjects. Whatever you learn could affect you deeply and become a part of you, changing your life for the better.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Backside
5 Qualified
9 Figurative use of a word
14 Bad to the bone
15 Golda of Israel
16 Pooh's favorite
17 Evening in Venezia
18 Judah's son
19 Fashion designer Simpson
20 All claim
23 Big, band tote
24 Sgt. or cpl.
25 Ginger __
28 Capital of North Carolina
31 Nocturnal flyer
34 Fictional Montague
36 Top marksman
37 Loser to the tortoise
38 Washington claim
42 Chimed in
43 Average grade
44 Valuable quality
45 Building wing
46 Wait in the wings
49 Hearth residue
50 "For Love" author Miller
51 Perry's creator
53 Garbo claim
60 What the nose knows?
61 Gumbo ingredient
62 Press
63 Blacksmith's shop
64 Long, narrow cut
65 Starchy root
66 Armada
67 Pageant ID
68 Park trees

DOWN
1 Lucy's hubby
2 Pigmented part of the eye
3 Business
4 __ and Scruggs
5 Single-celled organism
6 Bay of __
7 Truth stretcher
8 Sea eagle
9 Dead turf
10 Drive in Beverly Hills
11 Cash drawer slot
12 Bombard
13 Look at
21 Saginaw Bay's lake
22 Heavenly harpist
25 Originate
26 In the neighborhood
27 Messages by computer
29 Swallowed
30 Bar rocks
31 Light wood
32 Zodiac ram
33 Canines and bicuspids
35 Come to a conclusion
37 Holds
39 Group of eight
40 Brewed leaf
41 Clapton classic
46 Evenfall
47 Rubble
48 Air intake
50 Casual military address
52 Upper crust
53 Sacred image
54 Was dressed in
55 Sleep fitfully
56 Colo. neighbor
57 Verbal
58 "Cheers" regular
59 Son of Seth
60 Not at work

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14				■	15				■	16				
17				■	18				■	19				
20				21					22					■
■	■	■	23				■	■	24			■	■	■
25	26	27	■	28			29	30			■	31	32	33
34			35		■	■	36			■	37			
38					39	40				41				
42				■	43			■	■	44				
45			■	46				47	48		■	49		
■	■	■	50			■	■	51			52	■	■	■
■	53	54				55	56					57	58	59
60					■	61				■	62			
63					■	64				■	65			
66					■	67				■	68			

By Gregory E. Paul
Scottdale, PA
2/25/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	B	A	S	E	■	S	E	E	R	■	V	A	L	E
R	E	N	A	L	■	P	O	N	E	■	E	N	O	S
T	A	Y	L	O	R	A	N	D	D	E	N	N	I	S
S	T	A	T	■	E	D	S	■	■	L	E	A	S	E
■	■	■	I	P	S	E	■	R	O	U	E	■	■	■
■	S	I	N	A	T	R	A	A	N	D	R	E	E	D
B	A	R	E	R	■	■	C	L	U	E	■	R	A	E
O	T	I	S	■	M	O	R	E	S	■	M	I	M	E
N	I	N	■	M	A	L	I	■	■	L	A	C	E	D
N	E	A	L	A	N	D	D	O	U	G	L	A	S	■
■	■	■	A	R	E	S	■	P	L	E	A	■	■	■
A	M	A	T	I	■	■	T	I	A	■	P	S	I	S
D	U	K	E	A	N	D	B	A	N	C	R	O	F	T
A	N	I	S	■	E	R	A	T	■	B	O	R	N	E
M	I	N	T	■	E	Y	R	E	■	S	P	A	I	N

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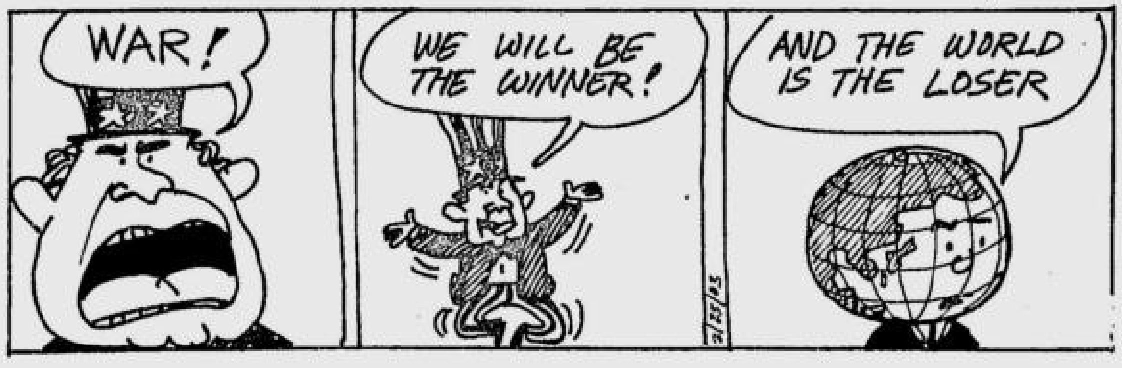
2/25/03

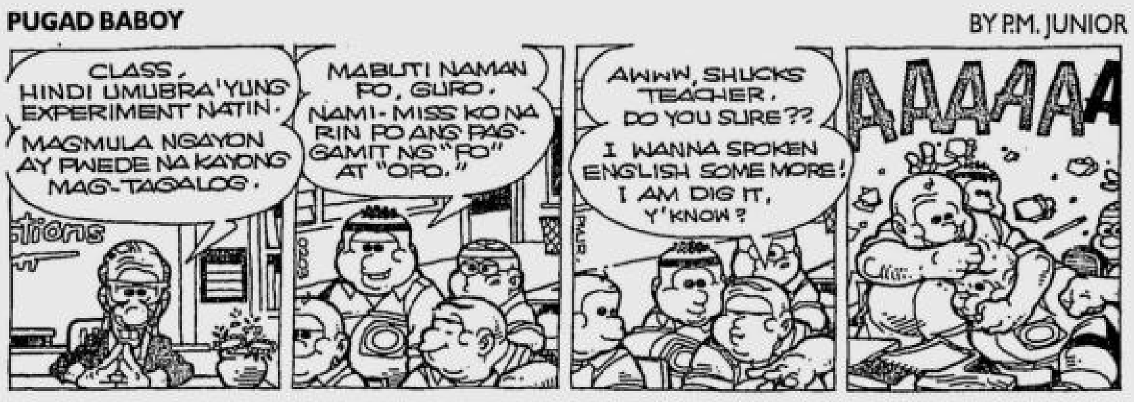
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WAR!
WE WILL BE THE WINNER!
AND THE WORLD IS THE LOSER
2/25/03

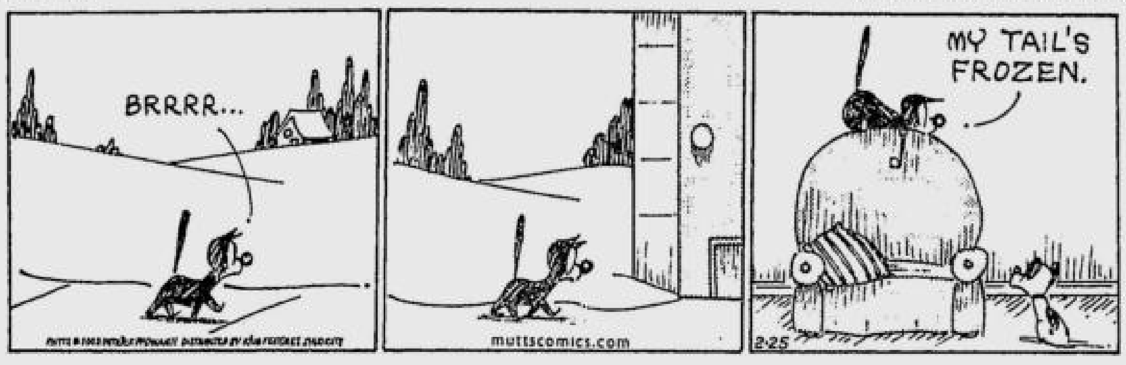
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


CLASS, HINDI UMUBRA 'YUNG EXPERIMENT NATIN.
MAGMULA NGAYON AY PWEDE NA KAYONG MAG-TAGALOG.
MABUTI NAMAN PO, GURO. NAMI-MISS KO NA RIN PO ANG PAG-GAMIT NG "PO" AT "OPO."
AWWW, SHUCKS TEACHER, DO YOU SURE?? I WANNA SPOKEN ENGLISH SOME MORE! I AM DIG IT, Y'KNOW?
AAAAAA

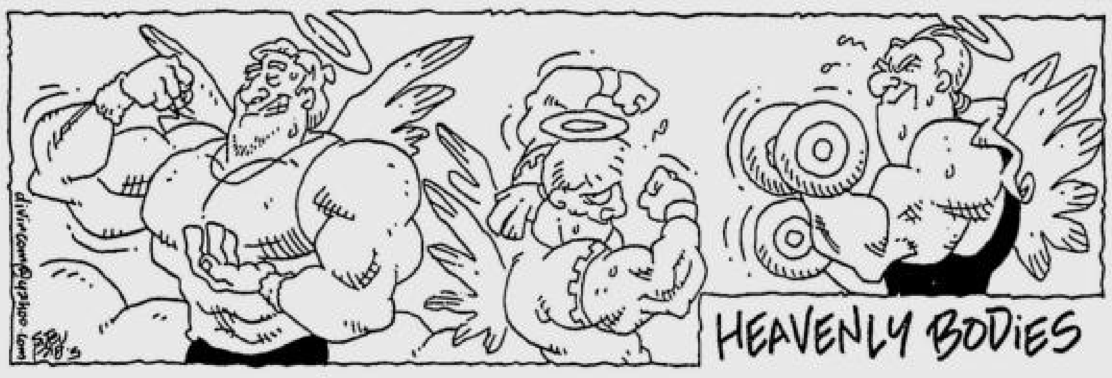
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BRRRR...
MY TAIL'S FROZEN.
muttscomics.com
2-25

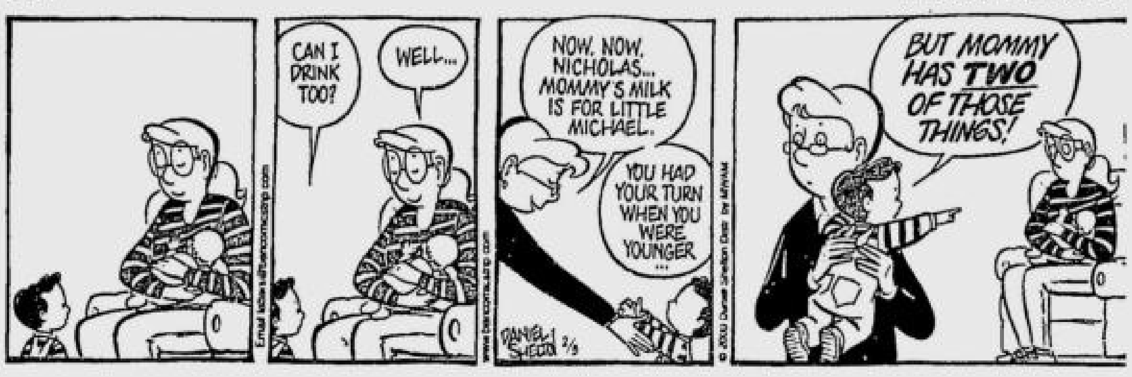
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HEAVENLY BODIES

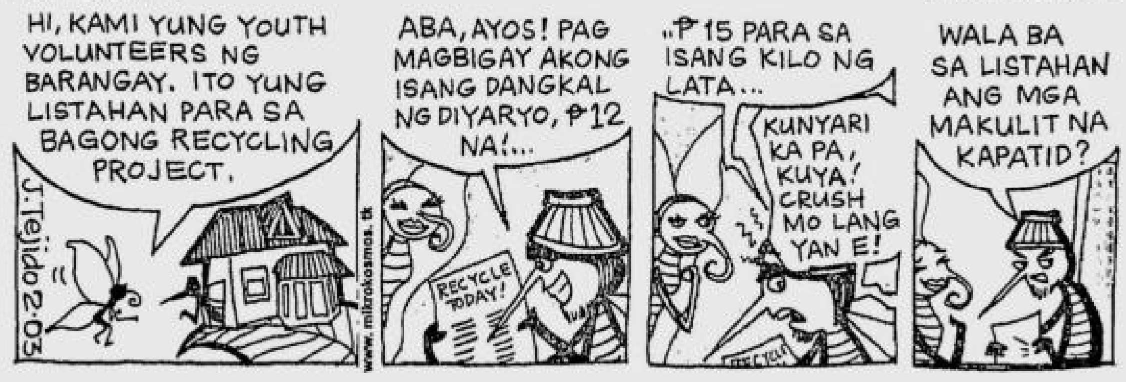
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


CAN I DRINK TOO?
WELL...
NOW, NOW, NICHOLAS... MOMMY'S MILK IS FOR LITTLE MICHAEL.
YOU HAD YOUR TURN WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER...
BUT MOMMY HAS TWO OF THOSE THINGS!

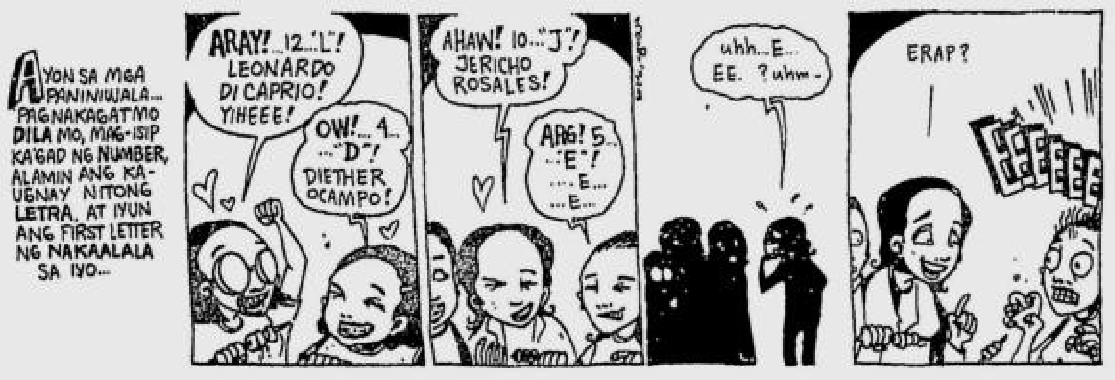
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HI, KAMI YUNG YOUTH VOLUNTEERS NG BARANGAY. ITO YUNG LISTAHAN PARA SA BAGONG RECYCLING PROJECT.
J. Tejido 2.03
ABA, AYOS! PAG MAGBIGAY AKONG ISANG DANGKAL NG DIYARYO, ₱12 NA!...
RECYCLE TODAY!
www.mikrokosmos.tk
..₱15 PARA SA ISANG KILO NG LATA...
KUNYARI KA PA, KUYA! CRUSH MO LANG YAN E!
WALA BA SA LISTAHAN ANG MGA MAKULIT NA KAPATID?

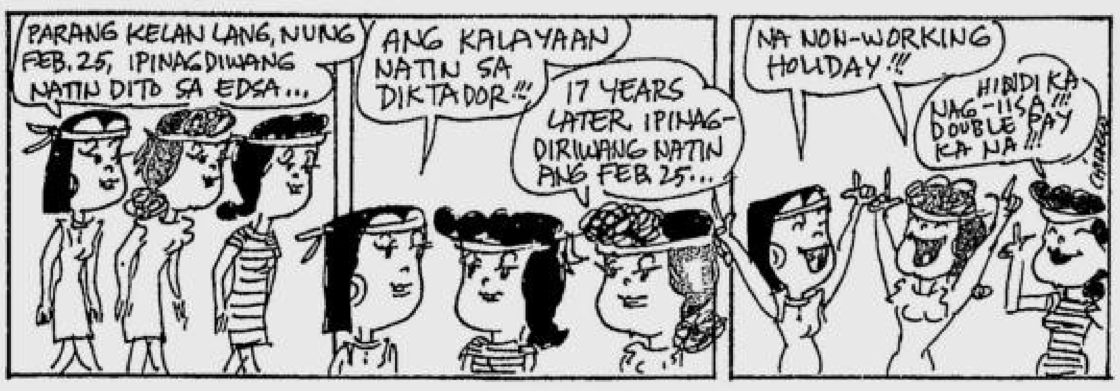
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


AYON SA MGA PANINIWALA... PAGNAKAGAT MO DILA MO, MAG-ISIP KAGAD NG NUMBER, ALAMIN ANG KAUGNAY NITONG LETRA, AT IYUN ANG FIRST LETTER NG NAKAALALA SA IYO...
ARAY! ..12.."L"! LEONARDO DI CAPRIO! YIHEEE!
OW!..4.."D"! DIETHER OCAMPO!
AHAW! 10.."J"! JERICHO ROSALES!
ARG! 5.."E"! ...E... ...E...
uhh..E.. EE. ?uhm-
ERAP?
EEEEEE

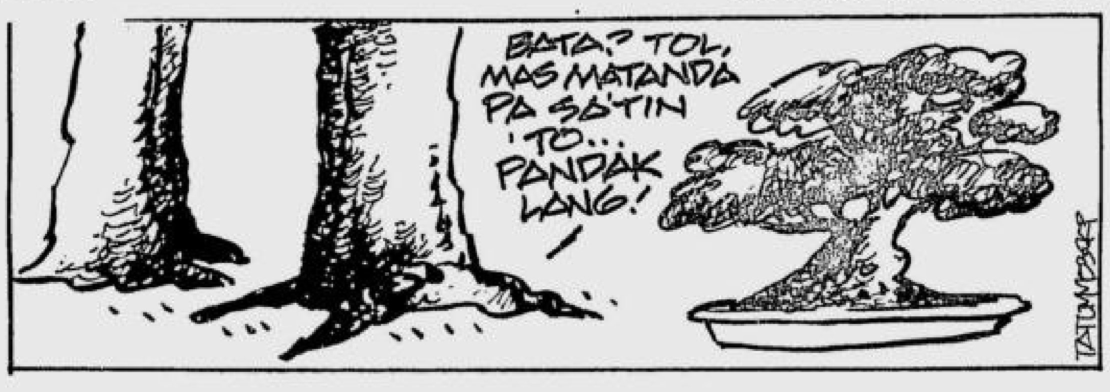
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PARANG KELAN LANG, NUNG FEB. 25, IPINAGDIWANG NATIN DITO SA EDSA...
ANG KALAYAAN NATIN SA DIKTADOR!!!
17 YEARS LATER, IPINAGDIRIWANG NATIN ANG FEB. 25...
NA NON-WORKING HOLIDAY!!!
HINDI KA NAG-IISA!!! DOUBLE PAY KA NA!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


BATA? TOL, MAS MATANDA PA SA'TIN 'TO... PANDAK LANG!
TATUM 03

ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS	1 DAREDEVIL	1 SWEPT AWAY (EXCLUSIVE) 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00	THX 1 GUARANTEED SEATS DAREDEVIL 12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15	THX 1 DAREDEVIL
2 HERO	2 DAREDEVIL	2 DAREDEVIL 11:40, 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00	THX 2 GUARANTEED SEATS DAREDEVIL 1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00, 11:25	2 DAREDEVIL
3 DAREDEVIL	THX 3 GUARANTEED SEATS DAREDEVIL 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	OGIE ALCASID: OA SA PUSO Feb. 28 & Mar. 1	3 GUARANTEED SEATS SHANGHAI KNIGHTS 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30	3 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4 DAREDEVIL	4 ABANDON		4 GUARANTEED SEATS HERO 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	4 ABANDON
	5 THE EYE		5 GUARANTEED SEATS TWO WEEKS NOTICE 12:55, 3:05, 5:15, 7:25, 9:35	5 TWO WEEKS NOTICE
	6 TWO WEEKS NOTICE			
	7 SHANGHAI KNIGHTS			

For screening times, call 729-7777. Movies are subject to change without prior notice. Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 and send to 2333. Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	FOUR FEATHERS
2 (SDDS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 (DTS)	DARE DEVIL
4 GOLD (DTS ES)	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	DAREDEVIL
6 GOLD (SDDS)	TREASURE PLANET
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX)	DAREDEVIL
8	NYMPHA
9	THE EYE
10	ABANDON

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	TOMAGANS
3 (DTS)	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	
5	BETTER THAN SEX
6 (DTS)	
Golden Pearl THX	

Maragana CINEMA 1 2 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	NYMPHA

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	TREASURE PLANET
2	BUKANG BIBIG
3	AMAZON
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	DAREDEVIL
5	NYMPHA

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	NYMPHA
2	SUKDULAN
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TOMAGANS
5	TREASURE PLANET
6	AMAZON

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	AB NORMAL

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13

DAREDEVIL

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	HERO
2	I SPY

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515

1	
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	TOMAGANS

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	HERO
2	TOMAGANS
3	SHIRLEY
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
4	NYMPHA
5	AMAZON
6	FOUR FEATHERS
7 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
8 (SDDS)	ABANDON
9 (DOLBY)	TREASURE PLANET

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1	NYMPHA
2	TREASURE PLANET
3	TOMAGANS
4 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
5	FOUR FEATHERS
6 (DOLBY)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
8	AMAZON
9	SUKDULAN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1	TOMAGANS
2 (SDDS)	TREASURE PLANET
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
5	NYMPHA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	TREASURE PLANET
2	AMAZON
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4	NYMPHA
5 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	DAREDEVIL

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	TOMAGANS

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	TOMAGANS
Lords	TOMAGANS
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	FOUR FEATHERS

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	TREASURE PLANET
4	NYMPHA
5	TOMAGANS

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1	
2	

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta City

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	NYMPHA
2	AMAZON
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	TREASURE PLANET
4 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
5 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
6	FOUR FEATHERS
7	ABANDON

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821/8242/8400

1	TOMAGAN
2	DAREDEVIL

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel. (049) 837-0926, 534-2185

1	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
2	NYMPHA
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	NYMPHA
2 (DTS)	TREASURE PLANET
3 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
4	FOUR FEATHERS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	FOUR FEATHERS
2 (DOLBY)	TREASURE PLANET
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4	NYMPHA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	SPECIAL SCREENING
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DOLBY)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	AB NORMAL
2	I SPY
3 (DOLBY)	THEY
4 (DTS)	FEMME FATALE

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY)	THEY
2 (DTS)	I SPY
3	AB NORMAL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS)	BUKANG BIBIG
4	TOMAGANS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	DAREDEVIL
2	NYMPHA
3 (DTS)	TREASURE PLANET
4	FEMME FATALE
5	BETTER THAN SEX

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3	SUKDULAN

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	BALAT SIBUYAS

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	AB NORMAL
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL
4	LORD OF THE RING

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	BETTER THAN SEX
2	HERO
3	AB NORMAL

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	AB NORMAL
2	I SPY
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TWO WEEKS NOTICE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (046)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	DAREDEVIL
2	AB NORMAL
3 (DTS ES)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	TREASURE PLANET

Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887 0121

1	MAGNIFICO
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3 (DOLBY)	TREASURE PLANET
4 (DTS)	DAREDEVIL

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

Walt Disney
TREASURE PLANET
OPENS TODAY

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868

1	FOUR FEATHERS
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TREASURE PLANET
5	DAREDEVIL
6	NGAYONG NANDITO KA
7	NYMPHA
8	AMAZON

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416

1	NAGYONG NANDITO KA
2	ABANDON
3	DAREDEVIL
4	NYMPHA
5	FOUR FEATHERS
6	THE EYE
7	DAREDEVIL
8	DAREDEVIL
9	TREASURE PLANET
10	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1	AB NORMAL COLLGE
2	HERO
3	MAGNIFICO
4	DAREDEVIL
5	SHANHAI KNIGHTS
6	NAGYONG NANDITO KA
7	DAREDEVIL
8	NYMPHA
9	DAREDEVIL
10	AMAZON
11	FOUR FEATHERS
12	TREASURE PLANET

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1	TREASURE PLANET
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	FOUR FEATHERS
4	DAREDEVIL
5	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
6	DAREDEVIL
7	NYMPHA
8	HERO
9	NGAYONG NANDITO KA
10	MAGNIFICO
11	THE EYE
12	DAREDEVIL

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TREASURE PLANET
3	ABANDON
4	FOUR FEATHERS
5	THE EYE
6	DAREDEVIL
7	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
8	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
9	NGAYONG NANDITO KA
10	DAREDEVIL
11	AMAZON
12	NYMPHA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9296462

1	THEY
2	DAREDEVIL
3	NGAYONG NANDITO KA
4	NYMPHA
5	ABANDON
6	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7	DAREDEVIL
8	TREASURE PLANET

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1	FOUR FEATHERS
2	THE EYE
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TREASURE PLANET
5	ABANDON
6	DAREDEVIL
7	NGAYONG NANDITO KA
8	DAREDEVIL
9	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
10	NYMPHA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1	DAREDEVIL
2	BELOW
3	CATCH ME IF YOU CAN
4	BETTER THAN SEX
5	MAGNIFICO
6	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
7	DAREDEVIL
8	TREASURE PLANET

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	TREASURE PLANET
2	CLOSED
3	DAREDEVIL
4	BELOW
5	I SPY
6	DAREDEVIL
7	CLOSED
8	MAGNIFICO

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	DAREDEVIL
2	DAREDEVIL
3	TREASURE PLANET
4	NYMPHA
5	FOUR FEATHERS
6	MAGNIFICO

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TREASURE PLANET

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	NYMPHA
4	AB NORMAL COLLEGE

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	DAREDEVIL
2	FOUR FEATHERS
3	I SPY
4	TREASURE PLANET
5	MAGNIFICO
6	DAREDEVIL

SM BICUTAN
776-3055

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	DAREDEVIL
4	TREASURE PLANET

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
859-2884

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TREASURE PLANET
3	I SPY
4	DAREDEVIL

THE PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
633-8876

1	DAREDEVIL 12:40 FS/1:10 MF/3:30/5:50/8:10/10:00 LFS/10:30 LMF/12:20 END
2	DAREDEVIL 11:00 MF/11:20/1:40/4:00/6:20/8:40/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:50 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 • Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

@ Robinsons Malls

call-a-movie: 536- 7812

NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632- 9115- 16 / 633- 7641 loc. 279

THX	DAREDEVIL 10:15 MF, 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30 LMF
2	DAREDEVIL
3	ABANDON
4	AMAZON
5	DAREDEVIL
6	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
7	EL CRIMEN DEL PADRE AMARO
8	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
9	HERO
10	THEY

MATINEE PRICE: P90 THX cinema · P75 I level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	THE EYE
4	ABANDON
5	DAREDEVIL
6	AMAZON
7	DAREDEVIL

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	THEY
2	DAREDEVIL
3	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
4	HERO
5	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
6	DAREDEVIL
7	TOMAGANS
8	AMAZON

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1	DAREDEVIL
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	TOMAGANS
5	HERO
6	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
7	THEY
8	AMAZON

Malabon Citisquare 288-0985 / 288-2575

1	TOMAGANS
2	DAREDEVIL
3	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
4	AMAZON

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp 875- 1927 / 961- 5318 / 5270

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TWO WEEKS NOTICE
3	FEMME FATALE
4	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
5	MATAMIS HANGGANG DULO
6	DAREDEVIL

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	DAREDEVIL
2	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
3	AMAZON
4	DAREDEVIL
5	TOMAGANS
6	MAGNIFICO

Sta. Rosa Laguna 049-8370907

1	DAREDEVIL
2	MAGNIFICO
3	SHAGNHAI KNGIHTS
4	TRY SEVENTEEN
5	THEY

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1	DAREDEVIL
2	TRY SEVENTEEN
3	THEY
4	I SPY
5	BETTER THAN SEX
6	AB NORMAL

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1	DAREDEVIL
2	I SPY
3	MAGNIFICO
4	BELOW
5	8 MILE
6	DAREDEVIL

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

List of 2003 Grammy Award winners

From page A28

"Playin' With My Friends: Bennett Sings the Blues," Tony Bennett.

- Female Rap Solo Performance: "Scream a.k.a. Itchin'," Missy Elliott.
- Male Rap Solo Performance: "Hot in Herre," Nelly.
- Rap Performance by a Duo or Group: "The Whole World," OutKast featuring Killer Mike.
- Rap/Sung Collaboration: "Dilemma," Nelly featuring Kelly Rowland.
- Alternative Music Album: "A Rush of Blood to the Head," Coldplay.
- Female Rock Vocal Performance: "Steve McQueen," Sheryl Crow.
- Male Rock Vocal Performance: "The Rising," Bruce Springsteen.
- Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal: "In My Place," Coldplay.
- Metal Performance: "Here to Stay," Korn.
- Rock Instrumental Performance: "Approaching Pavonis Mons by Balloon (Utopia Planitia)," The Flaming Lips.
- Rock Song: "The Rising," Bruce Springsteen (Bruce Springsteen).
- Rock Album: "The Rising," Bruce Springsteen

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	KAPAG BUMAYO PALAY / UNFAITHFUL CONCUBINE
ODEON	DAREDEVIL
ODEON-2	MALDITA / STRIP SHOW
ROBEN	BUKANG BIBIG
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	HALLOWEEN / ONE WRONG TURN
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	NYMPHA
CORONET B	FEMME FATALE / STICKMEN
QUEZON-1	BUKANG BIBIG
REMAR	DAREDEVIL
REMAR-2	BUKANG BIBIG
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	AB NORMAL
B	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
CINEMA-2	DAREDEVIL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	NYMPHA
CINEMA-2	SUKDULAN
CINEMA-3	MAGNIFICO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DAREDEVIL
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HERO
CINEMA-6	TOMAGAN
CINEMA-7	AB NORMAL COLLEGE
CINEMA-8	ABANDON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	DEREDEVIL
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DAREDEVIL
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS
CINEMA-12	4 FEATHERS
CINEMA-14	AMAZON
CINEMA-15	THEY
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING LINES
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

DAREDEVIL P13 11:40, 2:10, 4:40, 7:10, 9:40	SHANGHAI KNIGHTS GP 12:10,2:40,5:10, 7:40,10:10	TREASURE PLANET GP 11:50, 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 9:50
FOUR FEATHERS P13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00	ABANDON P13 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	DAREDEVIL P13 12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

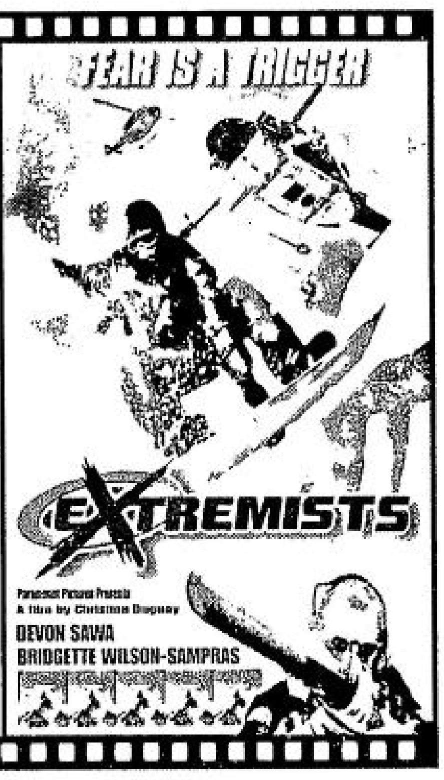
CINEMA 1
DAREDEVIL
11:20, 2:00, 4:35
7:10, 9:50
P13

CINEMA 2
TREASURE PLANET
11:00, 1:10, 3:20,
5:30, 7:40, 10:00
GP

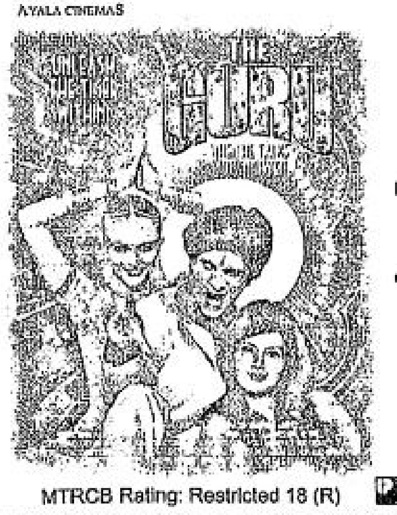
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
FEB 28, 2003 "MULA SA PUSOD (Pababa)" 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL
DWTM PREMIERE
on February 25, 2003
7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 3
MTRCB RATING: P13
Regular Showing on February 26, 2003
at the SM CINEMAS



AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS FEB. 26 EXCLUSIVELY AT
ArtFilm GREENBELT 1
THE GURU



HEATHER GRAHAM MARISA TOMEI
JIMI MISTRY

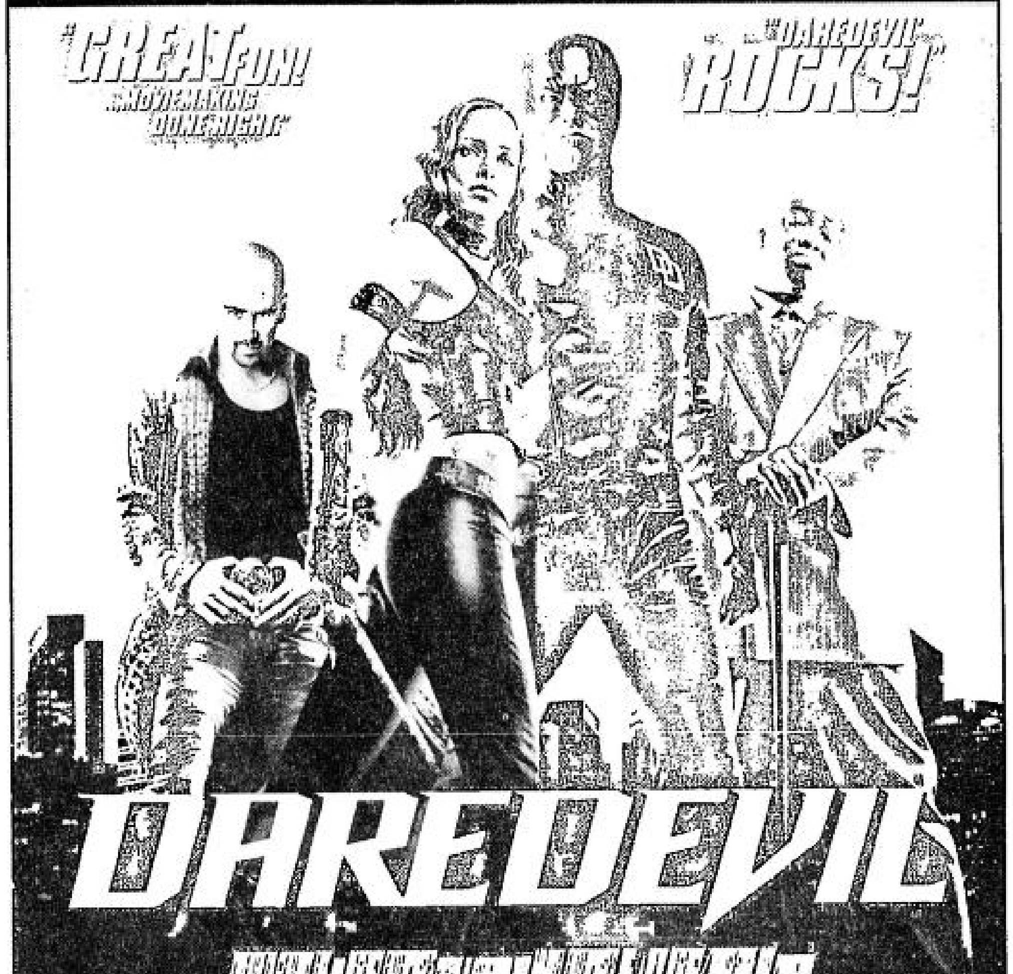
"Stirs together Bollywood and Hollywood, satire and romance, to create an appealing masala dish of a movie."
– Robert K. Elder, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"Mistry and co-star Heather Graham lend a fetching naiveté to their characters."
– Carla Meyer, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"THE GURU will leave you grinning from ear to ear."
– Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

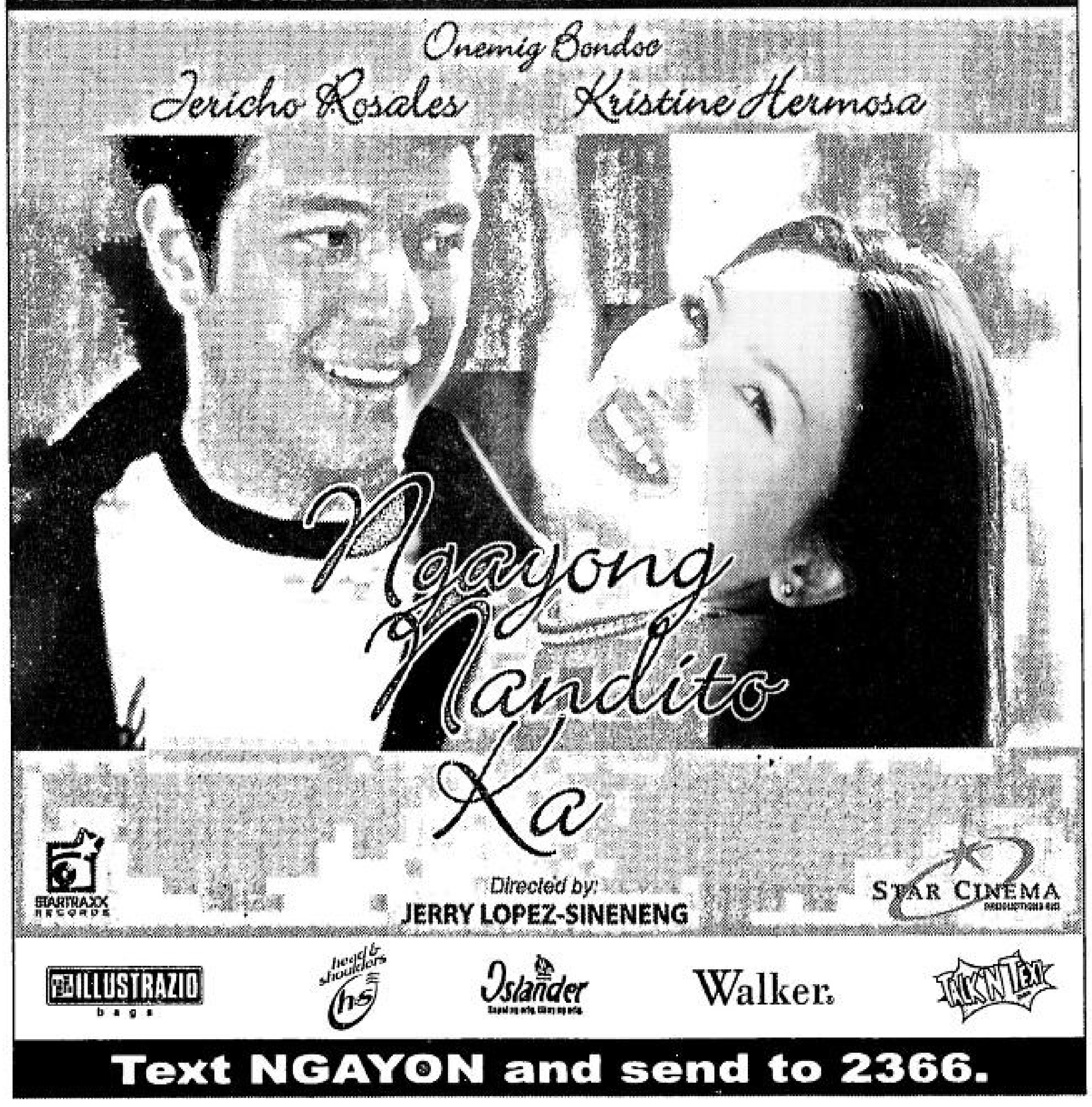
SPECIAL THANKS TO: NOKIA INQUIRER
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

MTRCB RATING ➤ PG 13 | Children below 13 years old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
"AS GREAT AS IT IS COOL."
SCOTT BOWLES, USA TODAY


"GREAT FUN! ...MOVIEMAKING DONE RIGHT."
"DAREDEVIL ROCKS!"

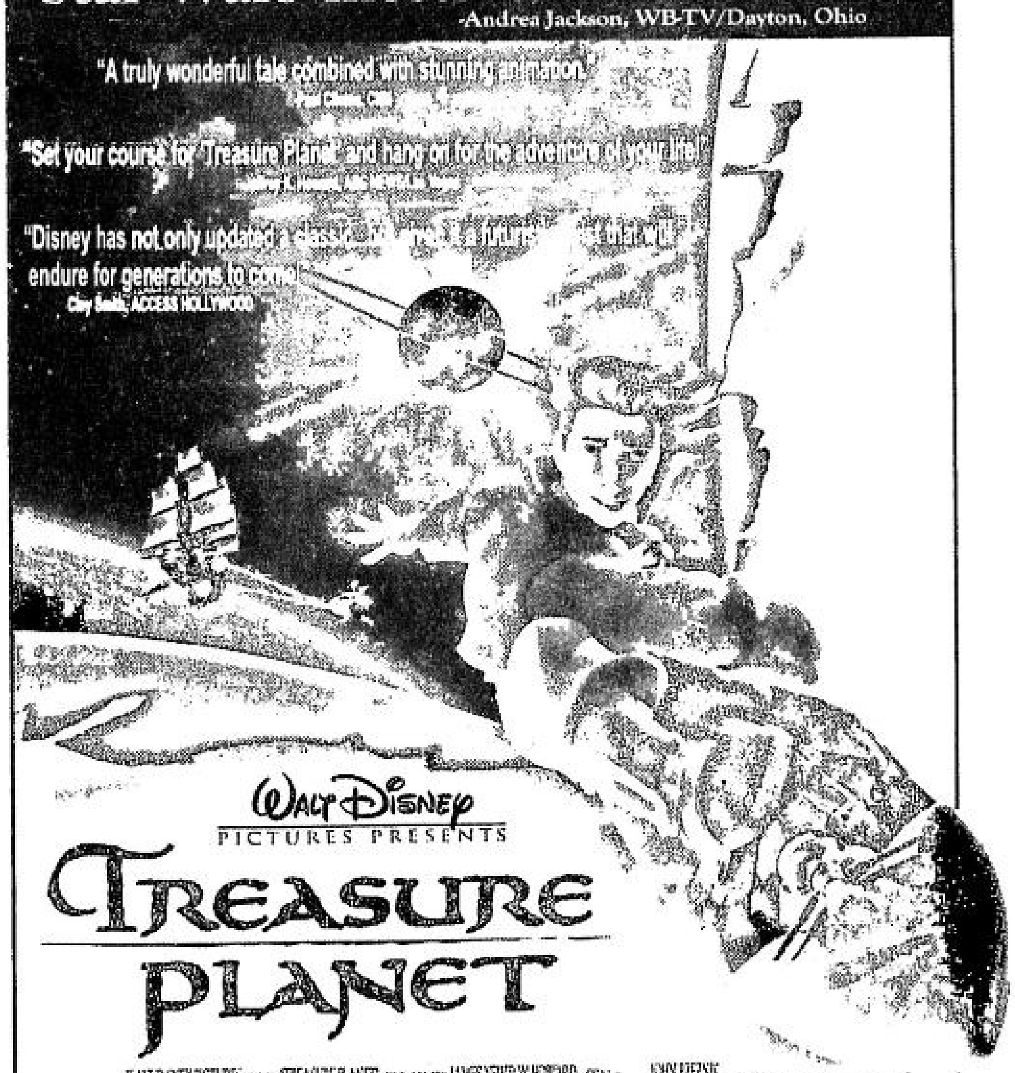
DAREDEVIL
MARVEL
WWW.DAREDEVILMOVIE.COM
DAREDEVIL THE ALBUM: 20 NEW SONGS
NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED
GRAND OPENING TODAY
DISCOVER REAL ROMANCE AND FILL YOUR HEARTS WITH LOVE!
FALL IN LOVE FOREVER WITH THE MOST AWAITED ROMANTIC EVENT!!!
Onemig Bondoc
Jericho Rosales Kristine Hermosa



STARTRAXX RECORDS
Directed by:
JERRY LOPEZ-SINENENG
STAR CINEMA
ILLUSTRAZIO bags · head & shoulders · Islander · Walker. · TALK 'N TEXT
Text NGAYON and send to 2366.

EXPERIENCE THE FAMILY MOVIE EVENT THAT'S BEING CALLED:
'Star Wars' meets 'Treasure Island.'
-Andrea Jackson, WB-TV/Dayton, Ohio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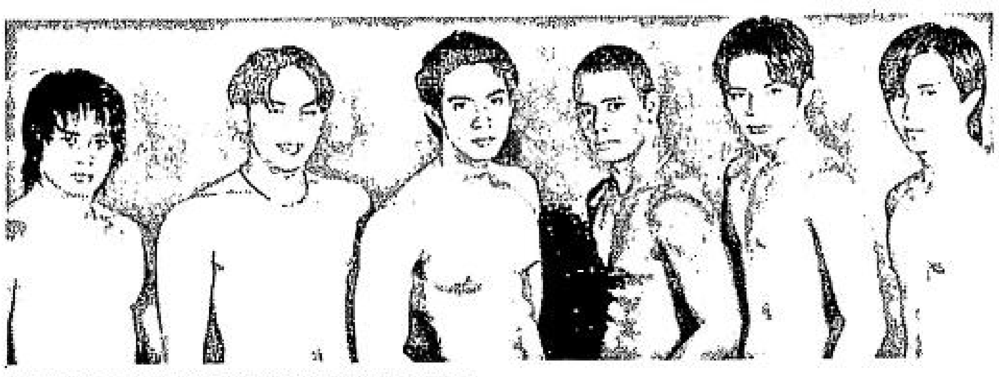

'ARE YOU MAN ENOUGH' FINALS Thirteen hunks will vie for the second annual "Are You Man Enough" title finals, 9 tonight, at Jefz Café. The contest is presented with Colt 45 Malt Liquor. This year's contestants are Michael Venzon, Alfie Centeno, Joel Ganaden, Haren Cuevas, Jack Mendoza, Miggs Espina, Aiman Perea, Raffy Masdo, Reden Rebadenera, Jerwin Mercado, Glenn Magnifico, Reden Erana and Daryll Roberts. For reservations, call 524-8641 to 45.

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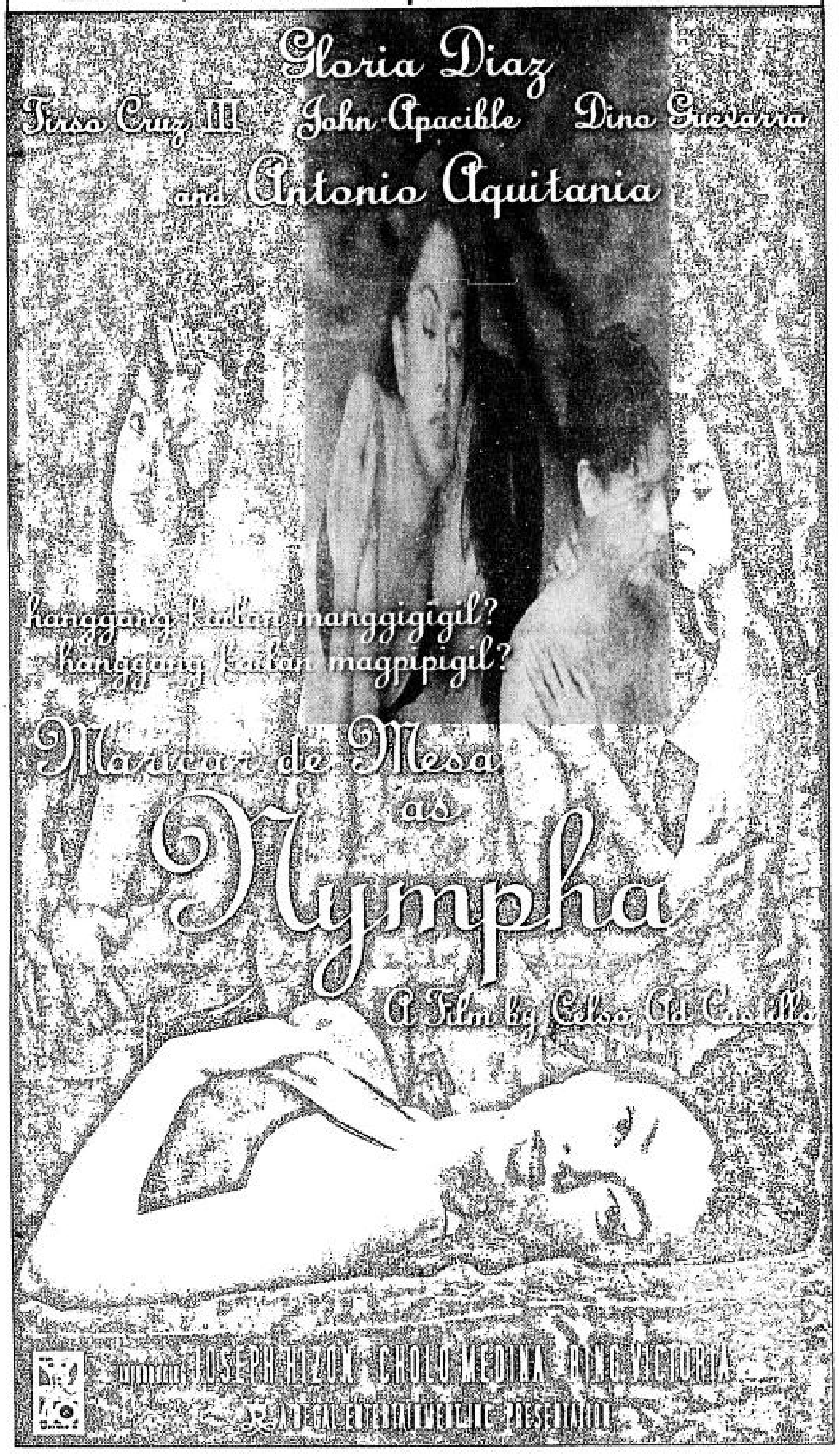
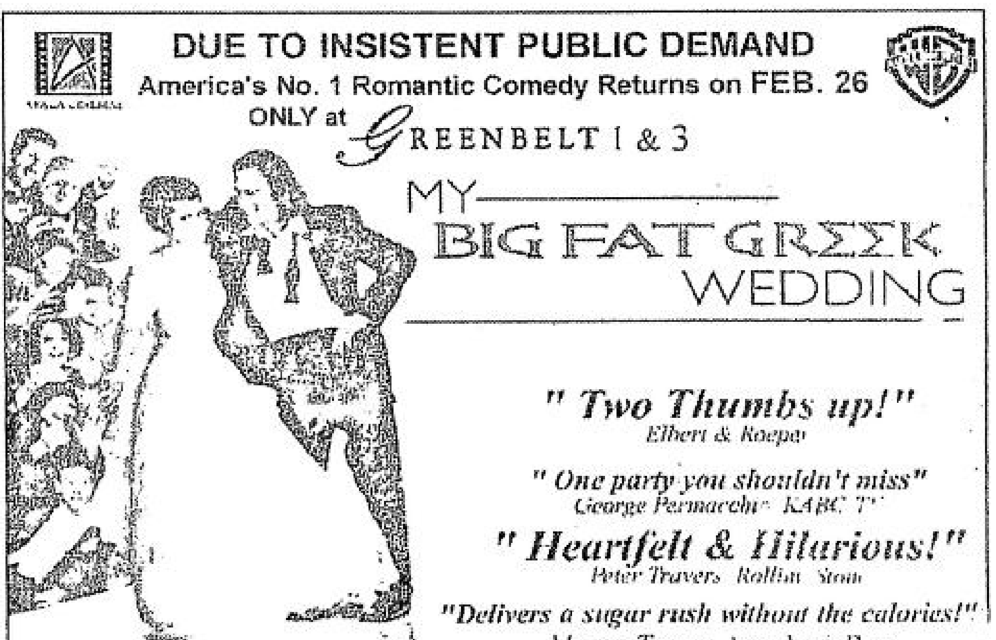


Gloria Diaz
Tirso Cruz III John Apacible Dino Guevarra
and Antonio Aquitania
hanggang kailan manggigigil?
hanggang kailan magpipigil?
Maricar de Mesa as
Nympha
A Film by Celso Ad Castillo



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Enlightening discussion

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SURVEYING the cultural scene on the ANC News Channel recently, **Behn Cervantes**, described by interviewer **Jing Magsaysay** as an "icon," shared some insights that our leaders should give serious attention to, so that we can see some improvements in the country's cultural life this year:

The Philippines keeps making the same mistakes and falling short of the mark because we are culturally confused. A clear cultural component is needed to truly make us strong.

Film is an important tool in this regard. But producers' commercial motives are at odds with the medium's artistic bent.

The key to better and more substantial films isn't technical innovation, but good scripts. Thus, the real hope for the industry and its audience is good scriptwriters. Unfortunately, the system makes it difficult for them to get the breaks they need to make their contribution to the industry.

Due to rising costs, Filipino movies need to go international to generate more funds to improve their production values. But we shouldn't copy films from Hollywood, and we shouldn't compete with them on point of technology, because in terms of budget, we would be clearly out of our league.

Instead, we should make good films about the Filipino experience, to which even international audiences could respond empathetically, due to the universality of their themes, situations and emotions.

Our film festivals should be reevaluated, and brought back to their original function to favor quality filmmaking above all else.

Our films should reflect contemporary life. They should open viewers' eyes and make them confront urgent issues, not run away from them. There should be more movies like "Dekada 70," which give viewers a visceral experience of key events in our nation's life.

What if producers say that those movies aren't popular? That may not necessarily be the case, depending on the financial will of producers to properly market those exceptional and important productions. Quite a number of significant movies have become hits, indicating that viewers here want to patronize good movies.

Yes, it's important to entertain them, but the meaning of that word need not be as shallow, simplistic and ephemeral as traditionally believed. Indeed, good entertainment can make viewers feel better and wiser, and it can enlighten them. —An enlightening discussion, all around!

Behn concluded his observations with this comprehensive note: we Filipinos must gain greater self-respect, despite the cynicism we've developed due to our frustrations over our occasionally failed leadership.

Are our leaders, both failed and effective, listening?

The Bachelor

LAST Friday, Feb. 21, the new "reality" TV show, "The Bachelor," started airing at 9 p.m. on Studio 23. The show gives single, "searching" guys the chance to meet the girl of their dreams in episodes that blend storybook romance with real-life situations.

Each week, the "searcher" and 15 beautiful young women go on out of town trips and get to know each other, and the pool gets progressively trimmed down until only three women are left. From them, the first bachelor, **Alex Michel**, will choose the one woman he wants to date—or propose to.

'Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan'

STARTING yesterday at 8:30 p.m., it's the turn of another Channel 2 soap, "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," to wind up its melodramatic twists and convolutions, after almost two years on the tube. From Monday to Friday this week the *teleserye* will try to wrap up all of its plot and subplots, which have taken complex-compound turns in the past 23 months.

Questions that will hopefully be answered this week include: What will happen to the scheming Ariane (**Georgina Sandico**)? Is the revenge of evil Sally (**Mylene Dizon**) complete? What will happen to Adora (**Pilar Pilapil**), Nanay Nelia (**Helen Gamboa**), Simang (**Eugene Domingo**) and Lola (**Gloria Romero**)?

And, will fate finally allow Angeline (**Claudine Barretto**) and Benjie (**Carlos Agassi**) to end up together, or will it tear them apart again, as it did in their past lives?

Let's hope that this soap will have a more exciting finale than "Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka."

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

Due to space constraints, Dollywood will come out tomorrow.

A big night for Norah Jones at the Grammys

NEW YORK—The soft, jazzy voice of Norah Jones inviting listeners to "Come Away With Me," swept up eight Grammy Awards at Sunday night's top music industry awards.

Jones, 23, nominated personally for five awards and tipped by many music critics to dominate the 45th annual Grammys, did just that by taking home the golden gramophone statuettes for album of the year, best new artist, record of the year for the single "Don't Know Why," best pop vocal album and best female pop vocal album.

"I can't believe this, I can't believe this. Bonnie Raitt and Aretha Franklin. This is freakin' me out," said Jones, who wore a black dress at the Madison Square Garden stage after receiving the record of the year award from the famous singers.

Later, after receiving the coveted album of the year, the modest Jones said, "I just want to say that at a time when this world is very weird, I feel really blessed and really lucky to have had the year I've had. Thank you very much."

The number "Don't Know Why" from her debut album "Come Away With Me," won song of the year for songwriter Jesse Harris, while the album collected best engineered album, non-classical category and producer of the year, non-classical.

Jones outdid the critics' other top pick, veteran rocker Bruce Springsteen, who won three Grammys for his album "The Rising," influenced by the Sept. 11, 2001 hijacked plane attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center, killing nearly 2,800 people.

The three-women country band Dixie Chicks won four Grammys for their work on the album, "Home."

SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHY. Newcomer Norah Jones carries five of her eight awards.

Jones is the daughter of Indian music master Ravi Shankar, 82, and former music promoter-turned nurse Sue Jones who were not married and split up before she was born. When she stood on stage to accept the first of her gold gramophone statuettes Sunday night, she thanked her mother but did not mention Shankar.

Raitt, who joined Franklin to present the record of the year Grammy, said, "Enough about building a mystery, let's build some peace."

Best female rock vocal performance Grammy winner Sheryl Crow sported a guitar strap, with the words "No War" written on it. She also wore a large, silver peace sign on a necklace as she performed on stage during the show broadcast live by CBS.

In the pre-telecast segment, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences gave Springsteen, 53, three Grammys in rock categories for "The Rising," the first all-new recording with his famous E Street band since 1984.

Springsteen and the band performed a rousing version of "The Rising" during the awards ceremony.

The Springsteen album includes the track "Into the Fire," which he wrote after the Sept. 11 attacks. Another track was "My City of Ruins," an earlier song about down-on-its-luck Asbury Park, New Jersey, that the musician dedicated to New York after the attacks.

In another echo of the attacks on New York, country singer Alan Jackson's emotional "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)" won in the category of best country tune.

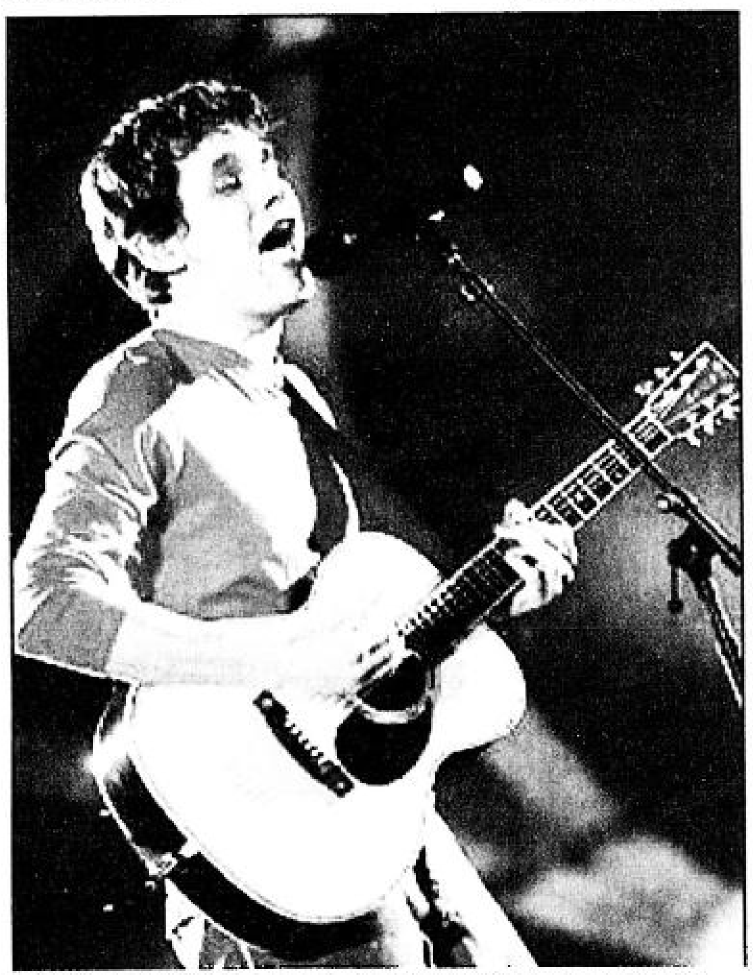
Dixie Chicks won Grammys for best country album for "Home" and best country performance by a duo or group with vocal, "Long Time Gone," and best country instrumental performance, "Lil' Jack Slade" and best recording package on "Home" went to art director Kevin Reagan.

The Grammys returned to New York for the first time since 1998. The awards were moved to Los Angeles in 1999 after then-Mayor Rudolph Giuliani had a much-publicized dispute with Academy executives. *Reuters*

The top music industry awards were punctuated by a smattering of low key anti-war protests

BEST RAP ALBUM. Eminen wins for "The Eminem Show."

'THE SOUND OF SILENCE.' Art Garfunkel (left) and Paul Simon perform at the Grammys.



BEST MALE POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE. Musician John Mayer sings "Your Body is a Wonderland."

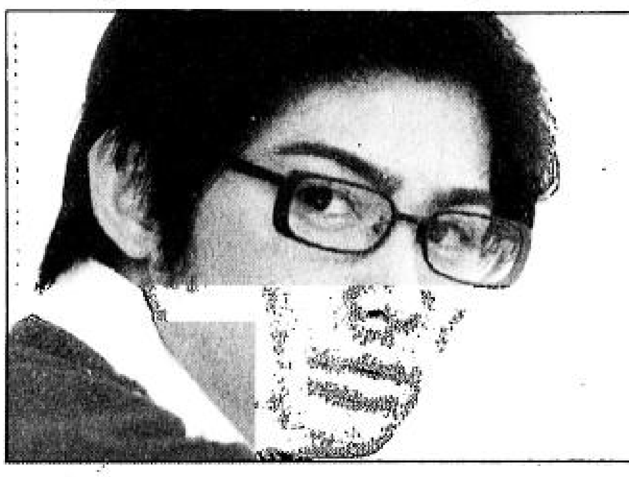
SALSA KING AND PARTNER. Latin singing sensation Marc Anthony with wife Dayanara Torres.

'THE RISING.' Bruce Springsteen gets three for the rock category.

List of 2003 Grammy Award winners

- ALBUM of the Year: "Come Away With Me," Norah Jones
- New Artist: Norah Jones
- Record of the Year: "Don't Know Why," Norah Jones
- Song of the Year: "Don't Know Why," Jesse Harris (Norah Jones)
- Hard Rock Performance: "All My Life," Foo Fighters
- Spoken Comedy Album: "Robin Williams-Live 2002," Robin Williams
- Country Album: "Home," Dixie Chicks
- Rap Album: "The Eminem Show," Eminem
- Male Pop Vocal Performance: "Your Body Is a Wonderland," John Mayer
- Pop Vocal Album: "Come Away With Me," Norah Jones
- Pop Vocal Performance by a Duo or Group: "Hey Baby," No Doubt
- Compilation Soundtrack Album for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media: "Standing in the Shadows of Motown," Various Artists
- Score Soundtrack Album for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media: "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," Howard Shore, composer
- Song Written for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media: "If I Didn't Have You," Randy Newman, songwriter, track from "Monsters, Inc."
- Classical Album: "Vaughan Williams: A Sea Symphony (Sym. No. 1)," Robert Spano, conductor, Norman Mackenzie, chorus director
- Classical Vocal Performance: "Bel Canto (Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini, etc.)," Renee Fleming, soprano
- Contemporary Folk Album: "This Side," Nickel Creek
- Reggae Album: "Jamaican E.T.," Lee "Scratch" Perry
- World Music Album: "Mundo," Ruben Blades
- Instrumental Composition: "Six Feet Under Title Theme," Thomas Newman, composer (Thomas Newman), from "Six Feet Under"
- Instrumental Arrangement: "Six Feet Under Title Theme," Thomas Newman, arranger (Thomas Newman), from "Six Feet Under"
- Engineered Album, Non-Classical: "Come Away With Me," Husky Huskolds, Arif Mardin and Jay Newland, engineers (Norah Jones)
- Producer of the Year, Non-Classical: Arif Mardin
- Remixed Recording, Non-Classical: "Hella Good (Roger Sanchez Remix Main)," Roger Sanchez, remixer (No Doubt)
- Short Form Music Video: "Without Me," Eminem.
- Long Form Music Video: "Westway to the World," The Clash
- Rock Gospel Album: "Come Together," Third Day
- Pop-Contemporary Gospel Album: "The Eleventh Hour," Jars of Clay
- Traditional Blues Album: "A Christmas Celebration of Hope," B.B. King
- Contemporary Blues Album: "Don't Give up on Me," Solomon Burke
- Latin Pop Album: "Caraluna," Bacilos.
- Latin Rock-Alternative Album: "Revolucion de Amor," Mana.
- New Age Album: "Acoustic Garden," Eric Tingstad and Nancy Rumbel.
- Contemporary Jazz Album: "Speaking of Now," Pat Metheny Group.
- Jazz Vocal Album: "Live in Paris," Diana Krall.
- Jazz Instrumental Solo: "My Ship," Herbie Hancock.
- Jazz Instrumental Album, Individual or Group: "Directions in Music," Herbie Hancock, Michael Brecker and Roy Hargrove.
- Female R&B Performance: "He Think I Don't Know," Mary J. Blige.
- Male R&B Performance: "U Don't Have to Call," Usher.
- R&B Performance by a Duo or Group: "Love's in Need of Love Today," Stevie Wonder and Take Six.
- R&B Song: "Love of My Life (An Ode To Hip Hop)," Erykah Badu, Robert Ozuna, James Poyser, Raphael Saadiq & Glen Standridge (Erykah Badu featuring Common).
- R&B Album: "Voyage To India," India.Arie.
- Contemporary R&B Album: "Ashanti," Ashanti.
- Female Country Vocal Performance: "Cry," Faith Hill.
- Male Country Vocal Performance: "Give My Love To Rose," Johnny Cash.
- Country Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal: "Long Time Gone," Dixie Chicks.
- Country Instrumental Performance: "Lil' Jack Slade," Dixie Chicks.
- Country Song: "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)," Alan Jackson (Alan Jackson).
- Female Pop Vocal Performance: "Don't Know Why," Norah Jones.
- Pop Collaboration with Vocals: "The Game of Love," Santana and Michelle Branch.
- Pop Instrumental Performance: "Auld Lang Syne," B.B. King.
- Pop Instrumental Album: "Just Chillin'," Norman Brown.
- Traditional Pop Vocal Album:

LIST/ A26



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BIR launches aggressive tax drive

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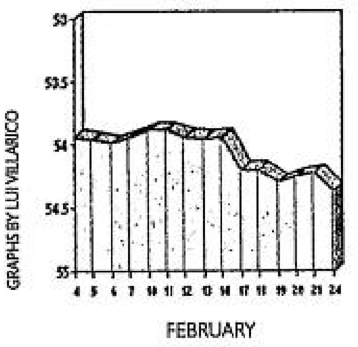

FEBRUARY

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P P54.37 $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb.24, 2003

¥ 118.58 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Feb. 24, 2003

GOLD: $352.50-353.00

per ounce Hong Kong, Feb.24, 2003

STOCK MARKET

Shares end down

SHARES ended lower for the fifth straight session yesterday because of jitters over a possible war in Iraq and bombings in Mindanao, traders said.

They also cited the weak peso and delays in amendments to the anti-money laundering law as market dampens.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 1.77 points, or 0.2 percent, at 1013.93, after shedding 0.7 percent Friday. The index has lost 2 percent since last Tuesday.

SM Prime ended down 10 centavos, or 1.9 percent, at P5.10 on follow-through selling. The stock lost 3.7 percent the past two sessions.

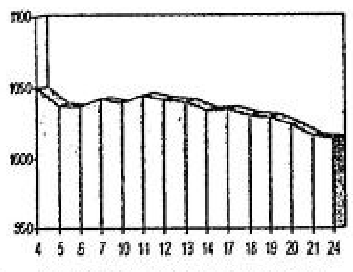
Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. had its seventh straight session of losses, closing down P5, or 1.7 percent, at P282.50. The stock has given up 8.9 percent since Feb. 14.

Traders said the market continued to brace for a possible US-led war on Iraq and threats of sanctions against the Philippines by the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force against money laundering. The country has until March 15 to pass amendments to its anti-money laundering law to meet global standards.

Financial markets will be closed today for a national holiday celebrating the 1986 revolution that toppled former President Ferdinand Marcos. *AP*

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

FEBRUARY



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue yesterday launched its first ever nationwide, year-long campaign to collect taxes in partnership with the private sector.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno rallied hundreds of BIR employees and private sector leaders at the Atrium in Makati, and among the crowd were big names from the private sector and even Brother Mike Velarde of the El Shaddai charismatic group.

The tax drive followed the decline in the BIR's tax effort in relation to GDP to an all-time low of 9.7 percent in 2002. It has set a collection target of P424 billion for 2003.

"This is our golden opportunity to make a difference. Our collection this year must hit at least 10 percent of the gross development product to meet our target," Parayno said. The BIR collects 80 percent of the government's annual revenues.

The launching of "Buwis Ko, Alay Ko" drew government leaders like Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura alongside business leaders Donald Dee of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, Raul Concepcion of the Federation of Philippine Industries, and Leonilo Coronel of the Bankers Association of the Philippines. Also seen at the gathering were PLDT official Napoleon Nazareno and Globe Telecom Inc. president Gerardo Ablaza.

"Please pay your taxes correctly, on time, and with a smile," Camacho urged the audience.

"To some extent, the private sector lost confidence and now is a good time to rebuild the trust. This is the first time that business and private sector are visibly committing to participate in a more aggressive tax campaign," said Dee, who also sits in the board of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

PARAYNO

Concepcion said the business sector realized that this was a very crucial time for the government to beef up its tax collection. "Let us stop talking all the time about good governance. Let us just do it," said the FPI chair.

Parayno said the tax campaign would be launched similarly in key cities in other regions.

He said El Shaddai's Velarde would "symbolically" pay his taxes on March 10 to set a good example to his millions of followers.

Among the business groups that signified their support were the Makati Business Club, the Philippine Institute of Public Accountants, the Financial Executive Institute of the Philippines, the Management Association of the Philippines, the Semiconductor and Electronic Industries of the Philippines Inc. and the Philippine Retailers Association.

Parayno said his agency had tapped San Miguel Corp., Smart Communications, Globe Telecom Inc., and McGeorge Food Industries to include the tax campaign in their advertising campaigns.

Parayno said the PCCI, the country's biggest business group, and Bangon Pilipino Movement were spearheading the solicitation from the private sector to finance the posters, billboards, and tri-media campaign of "Buwis Ko, Alay Ko."

Peso weakens to 19-month low on war concerns

By Clarissa S. Batino

AFTER a two-day reprieve last week, the peso tumbled anew yesterday to a fresh 19-month low of 54.48 to a dollar before closing at 54.37 from 54.225 on Friday.

Despite the weakness, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura expressed confidence the local currency would recover to 52 to a dollar by year's end and settle at full-year average of 53.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the peso succumbed to dollar-buying pressures observed among regional currencies.

The peso opened at 54.25 before huge demand for the greenback pushed it to 54.48, its lowest level since January 2001.

"There was increased demand due to month-end requirements of corporates, and there was also short-covering among banks. The movement of the peso is in tandem with the others in the region," Tetangco said.

Buenaventura said he expected the country's economic team to peg its estimate of the peso-dollar rate at 53 in its ongoing review of the country's economic targets.

"Since the peso already hit 54, and we see it recovering to 52 down the road, the most logical average would be 53 for the year," he said.

The Development Budget Coordination Committee is revising the country's macroeconomic and fiscal targets this year because of a looming conflict in the Middle East between the United States and Iraq.

"Now we are seeing the real effects of the US-Iraq war, and it's no longer just guesswork. We have to see whether the assumptions we made are still correct and the adjustments we provided for the US-Iraq war are still sufficient," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

He stressed, however, that the ongoing review "may or may not lead to changes."

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the DBCC had asked its technical working group to simulate how rising fuel prices would affect the 2003 targets.

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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

THAT South Korean construction company Hanjin just hired a PR group. In this group are actually well-known experts in political crisis and election campaign. Hmm.

Apparently, Hanjin needs that kind of help. It must be anticipating some trouble from politicos and, perhaps, their spouses as well, not to mention their girlfriends.

But what issue is Hanjin trying to deflect? I can only think of its role in the new six-building terminal at the Davao City international airport.

Hanjin is the contractor. Last year, the DOTC stopped construction work. The building beams showed a lot of cracks enough for a national "sungka" tournament.

But the DOTC and its consultants are still trying to figure out what to do. In other words, they are still fighting over a lot of things.

Still to be resolved, before construction work can resume, are tricky issues like who should pay for the repair, what technology to use, and what's in it for me.

***

IN a recent congressional hearing, anyway, which the House transportation committee held at Max's Restaurant in Davao City, Hanjin's slip showed.

According to what the congressmen extracted from Hanjin executives, with the use of trap questions, the company used local subcontractors for 90 percent of the work.

That, in the minds of the congressmen, was against the construction law. In a big way, Hanjin enjoyed the P1.7-billion contract on a "commission basis."

Word goes around construction circles that the locals even provided the structural engineers and, actually, put up all the money. Thus, it now seems to the congressmen that Hanjin actually told a big fat lie during the hearing. Its executives claimed that it only farmed out labor.

But the congressmen may likely issue subpoenas for the actual contracts. They cannot wait to see the actual documents. This should explain the PR ... well, subcontract.

***

MORE than 90 percent of Social Security System members work in small businesses. This treats the management of the pension fund to one big major family-size headache

Already, thousands of those small businesses owe the SSS a lot of money. They could not meet the payment of their share in their workers' contribution.

Yet only last week, this cute administration of Gloriaetta raised the SSS contribution rate. Not only that, only the employers would shoulder the increase.

Nobody can blame Gloriaetta. She must bite the bullet. The SSS is paying out more in benefits than it gets in members' contribution. In short, *lugi!*

But the SSS realized that very same problem way back in 1992. Yes, more than 10 years ago! Nobody did anything, simply because an increase was bad politics.

Question: How can those thousands of businesses, which are already up to their necks in debts with the SSS, now ever hope to meet the higher contribution rate?

No, don't answer that, Nardong Putik! It's a rhetoric question.

***

THAT higher contribution rate of the SSS is a big problem for a lot of businesses because not all of them are as big as San Miguel or Ayala or Meralco.

Still, if Gloriaetta follows the example of her predecessors and she does not do anything, the fund is not going to last long.

It's all so simple. The SSS pays a lot of benefits. Its income from members' contribution cannot cover the benefits. Solution: just raise the contribution. Simple.

But then again, all pension funds in world, also try to make the money earn, if only to hedge against inflation, for instance, which can actually eat the fund alive.

Like it or not, the SSS must invest. Don't tell me it should put all the money in Multitel, Mateo Management and the medical "practice" of Ernie Baron.

Pension funds play the stock market. Our SSS and, of course, the GSIS must be the only pension funds in the world that are completely out of the stock market.

***

THAT California pension fund called Calpers, which is one of the biggest pension funds in the world, if it is not the biggest, puts as much as 90 percent of all its funds in stocks.

Now Calpers has billions upon billions of investment funds—in DOLLARS! Almost all of its money is in the stock market.

In Canada, their equivalent of our SSS, which is called Caisse, puts as much as 80 percent of its funds into the stock market.

Well, as they say, stocks are the best hedge against inflation. Pension funds all over the world know it. Our SSS unraveled such a mystery only in 1996. They found out about the trend in pension funds overseas. What's that—pension found?

The head of the fund then was Renato Valencia, an ex-military guy and a former banker. He worked for a new SSS charter so that it can put more money in stocks.

By May 1997, the SSS could put up to 30 percent in the stock market. Look, 30 percent is even more conservative than my octogenarian neighbor who is still a virgin.

***

THUS, the following year, starting in 1998, this time under Carlos Arellano, also a banker, the SSS started to trade more funds in the market.

In Arellano's time, the SSS put as high as 28 percent of its money in the stock market. It made something like P45 billion from 1998 to 2000.

But then, Arellano left the fund, not because he had somewhere else to go, but because his term was co-terminus with his boss, the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

All of a sudden, the SSS distanced itself from the stock market. It did not trade a single stock in its holdings. It did not bother to watch the market. It just scratched its ...

Today, we have the weakest stock market in the region. For this, everybody can offer a harddisk-full of reasons. One of them is the absence of the SSS and GSIS.

Precisely, they are the only pension funds in the country, and they are out of the market—and that is, completely out. That's P100 billion in potential trading. Easily!

***

ANY market is always a two-way street for pension funds like the SSS. They need the market to make money, but the market needs them as much.

For if the SSS and GSIS trade in this stock market, they can do a lot of buying and selling. They can provide the action. In market parlance, it is the "liquidity."

Stocks are for trading and for investment. You don't buy stocks and bury them in the backyard. You trade them, depending on the ups and downs of prices.

Now, if the SSS and GSIS can only stop thinking that they will explode if they trade in the market, they create some action.

Only then will the local boys, who are—believe me—putting all their money in dollars already, can join in for a piece of the action.

When the locals are in the market, we will see more action. It can become what they call an "active" market. Who knows, maybe pension funds abroad will also come in?

The problem is, however, such a worldwide practice is just too much for some people to understand. Are you still there, Nardong Putik?

UBS loses $170-M gov't business

By Clarissa S. Batino

UBS Warburg, one of the world's biggest investment banks, has been shut out of the government's $2-billion fund management and underwriting business for at least a year for impairing the government's foreign bond issue last month.

According to persons familiar with the matter, UBS has been barred from managing some $170 million of the central bank's funds.

The money is part of some $2 billion in reserves that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas allows about 10 investment banks to manage.

Sources said top-level UBS officials were trying to arrange meetings to convince key central bank and finance officials to reconsider their decision.

A UBS study on alleged embellishments in the country's trade statistics was published by newspapers abroad in early January, a few days before the government began selling some $500 million worth of 10-year global bonds.

The adverse reports raised the cost of the government's borrowing by 25-basis points, or about P70 million.

Government officials have since been pressuring UBS to name its sources. Observers say the inquiry may eventually land on the doorsteps of the International Monetary Fund.

Persons familiar with the matter disclosed that UBS was preparing a letter that would tag the IMF as the source of the data it used in exchange for favorable action from the government.

A source from the finance department said the government would review its position on the matter of UBS' penalties.

A central bank official clarified that UBS was not entirely eliminated from the fund management business.

"The volume of their fund was only lightened, but they were not totally eliminated," a BSP official, who sought anonymity, said.

UBS, like other fund managers, is performing well, he said.

The country's three-year-old problem with its trade data was revived by the Asian Wall Street Journal in early January, quoting a study made by UBS.

The report said the Philippines had been understating imports in the last three years, effectively overstating the current account surplus to give investors an impression that the country's trade was in a healthy position.

AT&T: From arrogant bully to whining brat

By Abigail L. Ho

(Second of two parts)

THE WHOLE termination rate issue became a bit more complicated as more and more facts, as well as various opinions, started to surface. For one, the battle between the local carriers and AT&T Corp. seemed to have become a classic case of one entity's word against the other.

In interviews and statements, AT&T president for Asia-Pacific international ventures organization Chip Barton said the company was "anxious" to return to the negotiating table with local carriers Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Globe Telecom Inc., Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc., Smart Communications Inc. and Bayan Telecommunications Inc.

"We've expressed the desire to continue talking with all of them. We're still in communication with them," he said.

But executives from the local telecom firms were surprised at AT&T's eagerness "to return to the negotiating table," as there had been no negotiations in the first place. At least until AT&T filed a petition with the Federal Communications Commission against the local carriers.

Go back to what?

"AT&T had not been actively negotiating with Digitel from November 2002, when we first gave them notice of the increase. AT&T never sat down with us. We've been there all along. We were just waiting for them to come in," Digitel senior vice president for legal and inter-carrier services William Pamintuan said.

Digitel, he said, sent AT&T a number of letters informing the American firm of an increase in the termination rates that local carriers would implement starting Feb. 1 from 8 US cents to 12 US cents for fixed line and from 12 US cents to 16 US cents for mobile.

Globe senior vice president for corporate and regulatory affairs Rodolfo Salalima related a similar experience with AT&T, although the American carrier actually responded to one of Globe's letters with a flat "no" to its proposal to raise the termination rates.

What made the rejection worse was that AT&T did not even give Globe a counterproposal that the two firms could at least negotiate before their contract lapsed on Jan. 31.

AT&T only signified an interest to negotiate after filing a case with the FCC. It also gave its counterproposal then of 6 US cents for fixed line and 10 US cents for mobile.

However, Smart legal, external and carrier relations head Rogelio Quevedo questioned AT&T's real intention when it filed a case with the FCC.

He reasoned that termination rate agreements were bilateral in nature—agreements struck between the parties concerned—and did not need intervention from any other entity.

"Why at the FCC? Contracts have always been bilateral. AT&T is just using its influence and monopoly power to pressure the Philippine government. It is using the regulators in what is supposed to be something purely bilateral," he said.

Quevedo said it was not so much the loss of traffic from AT&T should it not agree to new rates that he was worried about, but that AT&T's petition to the FCC would compel all US carriers not to make any settlement payments to carriers here.

Pressure

Local carriers, he said, stood to lose around $60 million to $80 million should the FCC uphold AT&T's petition. This amount only covered unpaid dues from US carriers and excluded potential revenues from calls made through their networks coming to the Philippines.

Salalima said AT&T had been withholding payments on as much as $13.5 million in debts to Globe, apparently to pressure the Ayala-led firm to give in to its demand for lower termination rates.

He said AT&T was supposed to pay $3.5 million of its debts to Globe last December but, up to now, it had not remitted even a centavo of that.

"While Globe will continue to act reasonably in this matter, any discussions which AT&T may wish to have with Globe on this should not be complicated by threats of AT&T to withhold payment, particularly of sums long overdue," he said.

AT&T Asia-Pacific group regional public relations director Greg Brutus denied allegations his company was withholding payments to local carriers to keep from complying with the new termination rates.

"We are not refusing to pay carriers at this time, and we continue to follow the standard settlement process with Globe. We would prefer to handle business discussions directly with the carriers rather than through the media," he said.

AT&T/ B3

> AT&T never sat down with us. We've been there all along. We were just waiting for them to come in. —**Digitel senior vice president William Pamintuan**

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As Of February 24, 2003)

Stocks	Open	High	Low	Close	Volume
Banks & Financial Services					
Banks					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	16	16	15.75	15.75	20,000
Bank Of The Phil. Islands	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	291,200
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,100
Equitable Pci Bank Inc..	24.25	24.25	24	24	61,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27	26	27	91,900
Union Bank Of The Phil.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	7,400
Financial Services					
Bankard Inc..	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1,350,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	30,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1295	1310	1295	1310	3,590
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc..	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	945	975	945	970	2,400
Communication					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	3,810,000
Globe Telecom Inc..	530	535	530	530	27,500
Ism Communications Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	700,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	2.85	3.2	2.85	3.05	112,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	190,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	290	290	282.5	282.5	17,060
Power & Energy					
Manila Electric Co. A	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.4	304,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	663,300
Petron Corp. 1	.64 1.6	6 1.6	4 1.6	6	503,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	300,000
Transportation Services					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.34	'2.34	2.34	2.34	50,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	1.92	1.92	1.92	1.92	4,000
Construction & Other Related Products					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Food, Beverages & Tobacco					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.5	12,700
La Tondena Distillers,Inc	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	1,000
RFM Corp. .6	900 .69	0.69	0.69		90,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58	57.5	58	423,500
San Miguel Corp. B	66	66.5	65.5	65.5	257,300
Universal Robina Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	11,000
Holding Firms					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	200,000
Ayala Corp. 4	.20 4.2	4.1	5 4.1	5 1	,022,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.36	2.36	2.36	2.36	1,665,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	11	11	10.75	11	800
A. Soriano Corp. .6	000 .6	0.6	0.6		200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
Atn Holdings Inc..	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	5,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10	10	10	81,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.12	1,260,000
Basic Consolidated Inc..	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Crown Equities Inc..	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	110,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	200,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	140,000
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	586,000
Macroasia Corp. .4	500 .45	0.45	0.45		240,000
Megaworld Corp. .5	800 .58	0.58	0.58	1	,150,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.135	0.15	0.135	0.135	1,650,000
Music Corp. .1	750 .17	5 .17	0.17	5	920,000
Roxas Holdings Inc..	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	30,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc..	0.042	0.042	0.042	0.042	100,000
Manufacturing, Distribution & Trading					
SPI Technologies Inc..	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.5	46,500
Hotel, Recreation & Other Services					
Belle Corp. .28	00 .28	0.28	0.28		550,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	350,000
Manila Jockey Club	7	7	7	7	12,000
Bonds, Preferred & Warrant	s				
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	12	12	12	12	300,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.- Pref.	775	775	775	775	50
Pldt (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	1,000
Pldt 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
Pldt 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
Pldt 10% Pref Series Cc	10	10	10	10	1,000
Property					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.65	4.75	4.6	4.75	1,871,000
Cebu Holdings Inc..	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	24,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc..	0.89	0.89	0.86	0.86	540,000
Sm Development Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	27,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc..	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	1,278,000
Mining					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.215	2,440,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0026	0.0026	0.0024	0.0024	7,000,000
Omico Corp. .0	020 .00	2 .00	2 .00	2 20	,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	700,000
Oil					
Interport Res.	0.0016	0.0016	0.0016	0.0016	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	3,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,960,490	21,894,475.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	19,498,710	92,273,090.00
PRO	28,646,000	18,662,920.00
Mining	31,240,000	798,700.00
OIL	6,000,000	12,000.00
GRAND TOTALS:	87,345,200	133,641,185.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	343.15	UP 0.73
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,474.93	DOWN 5.83
PRO	439.51	UP 1.04
Mining	1,180.68	DOWN 11.60
OIL	1.04	UP 0.03
All Shares Index	640.34	UP 5.49
Composite	1,013.93	DOWN 1.77

NO. OF ADVANCES: 16, NO. OF DECLINES: 22, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 36, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 74, NO. OF TRADES: 830

DISCLOSURES

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. has moved its annual stockholders meeting to May 22, 4 p.m., at the Manansala Ballroom of Manila Galleria Suites. Stockholders as of April 22 are entitled to notice of and to vote during the meeting.

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LEPANTO Consolidated Mining Co. has disclosed that officers of the Lepanto Local Staff Union and Lepanto Employees' Union have signed with management a memorandum of agreement for the termination of a strike at its mining site.

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UNIOIL Resources & Holdings Co. Inc.'s new office is located at 2G Park & Gym Building, Westmont Village, Parañaque. Also, the company has announced the appointment of Peter Francis Zagala as acting compliance officer. He is also the company's corporate secretary.

***

TANDUAY Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders meeting on May 8, 4 p.m., at the Kachina Room of Century Park Sheraton Hotel. Stockholders as of April 8 are entitled to notice of and to vote during the meeting. Also, the company has announced the resignation of four directors: Florencio Santos, Domingo Chua, Harry Tan and Tan Eng Chan. Elected to replace them were James Yu, Michael Tan, Andres Co and Lucio Tan Jr.

***

ASIAN Terminals Inc. has announced a change in its organizational structure that involves the division of its South Harbor operations into international and domestic operations. Mark Ripka was appointed senior vice president for South Harbor international, while Paul Hough was appointed SVP for domestic. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

February 24, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.927902	1.000000	54.238000
Japan	Yen	0.007819	0.008427	0.457100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.466271	1.580200	85.706900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.118980	0.128225	6.954700
Switzerland	Franc	0.680230	0.733084	39.761000
Canada	Dollar	0.616833	0.664761	36.055300
Singapore	Dollar	0.531840	0.573164	31.087300
Australia	Dollar	0.554037	0.597086	32.384800
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.461409	2.652661	143.875000
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.247454	0.266681	14.464200
Brunei	Dollar	0.530321	0.571527	30.998500
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000112	0.006100
Thailand	Baht	0.021657	0.023340	1.265900
UAE	Dirham	0.252662	0.272294	14.768700
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.077700	58.452300
Argentina	Peso	0.292713	0.315457	17.109800
Brazil	REAL	0.256894	0.276855	15.016100
Denmark	Kroner	0.134537	0.144991	7.864000
India	Rupee	0.019493	0.021008	1.139400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.244217	0.263193	14.275100
Mexico	New Peso	0.084895	0.091491	4.962300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.517687	0.557911	30.260000
Norway	Kroner	0.132612	0.142916	7.751500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016081	0.017331	0.940000
South Africa	Rand	0.115373	0.124338	6.743800
Korea	Won	0.000780	0.000841	0.045600
Sweden	Kroner	0.109513	0.118022	6.401300
Syria	Pound	0.022093	0.023810	1.291400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026779	0.028860	1.565300
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000582	0.000627	0.034000

Malaysian firms remain keen on investing in RP

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALAYSIAN investors remain keen on putting their money in the Philippines despite a number of soured investment deals with Philippines businessmen, particularly in the bankrupt National Steel Corp.

"For us one sour deal with a foreign counterpart does not mean anything. It is just a wrong partnership at the wrong time," said Malaysian Minister of International Trade and Industry Rafidah Aziz. The outspoken Aziz is spearheading a 9-day trade and investment mission of Malaysian state officials and private businessmen in the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand.

Aside from NSC, a major Malaysian palm oil had likewise got burned from its business deal with local investors who failed to come up with the land for the plantation after getting the down payment from the Malaysians.

As proof of the Malaysian's interest in the Philippines, Aziz said there were 66 companies and 90 business people representing rubber products, highway construction, smart card products and petrochemicals compared to the 47 businessmen that accompanied her during her visit in Manila in 2001.

Aziz said that most Malaysians were not even aware of the huge losses incurred by Malaysian firms—Wing Tiek Holdings and Renong Bhd.—when NSC was forced to close down its Iligan plant and its assets were taken over by Philippine creditor-banks in November 1999.

Aziz said NSC should not be used as a benchmark whether their investments would succeed or fail in the country. "There are actually a lot of business deals that push through and succeed here," Aziz said. She cited 36 Malaysian companies operating in the country such as Petronas, Maybank, Shangri-La Hotel chain, Metroplex Bhd., and Lityan Holdings Bhd.

Aziz said Malaysia has always encouraged her private sector to pursue investment possibilities in the Philippines particularly in banking and finance, infrastructure development, palm oil plantations, telecommunication and tourism. Malaysian businesses are currently moving toward upgrading their operations by shifting to higher technology and higher value-added products which Aziz said has forced some Malaysian companies to relocate to more labor-intensive industries.

LRT project opened to new offers

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT has decided to subject the $597-million Light Railway Transit South extension project from Baclaran to Cavite to a price challenge before it finalizes the contract with Canadian contractor SNC Lavalin International Inc.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri told reporters yesterday that the Swiss challenge or price-test challenge would be done as soon as he gets an opinion from the Department of Justice on the validity of the BOT contract.

Subjecting a contract to a Swiss challenge is required for unsolicited build-operate-transfer proposals.

Under this scheme, the unsolicited BOT proposal will be opened to counter offers from the public to see if the offer by the original proponent, in this case SNC Lavalin, is reasonable.

The original proponent, however, reserves the right to match the best bid if it wants to retain the project.

SBC posts ₱528-M income

By Elena R. Torrijos

SECURITY Bank Corp. has exceeded its profit target last year due to an increase in fee-based income and lower operating expenses.

SBC ended 2002 with a net income of P528 million, up 24 percent from P427 million the previous year.

This was better than the 20 percent target for the year, bank president Rafael Simpao Jr. said.

"The strategy (this year) would be to grow the non-interest differential business," Simpao said.

This includes fee-based income and Treasury operations.

Security Bank is a publicly listed mid-sized commercial bank owned by a group of Filipino-Chinese businessmen in partnership with Taiwanese investors. It has 115 branches nationwide.

AT&T: From arrogant giant...

From page B2

Apart from the alleged financial pressure that AT&T was leveraging on, carriers also accused the American carrier of "scaring" the government into intervening on its behalf.

Sunshine industry

AT&T's Barton said the ongoing row over termination rates was unlikely to improve the country's image as a potential hub for call centers as an increase in these rates could inevitable result in higher costs of doing business here.

"The Philippine government is trying hard to attract foreign investment to boost the economy by positioning the Philippines as a communications hub for call centers, software development and outsourcing, among other things. Such a dramatic potential increase in the cost of doing business with the Philippines undermines these initiatives," he said.

But Salalima explained that data and call centers relied heavily on leased lines and circuits that carried both data and voice for connectivity. These leased lines were priced under an entirely different structure.

For leased lines, customers pay monthly leased charges and not per-minute termination rates.

Also, PLDT vice president for media and communications Menardo Jimenez Jr. said the country's dominant carrier was in full support of the government's thrust to promote the call center industry, and that the dispute over termination rates had nothing to do with call centers.

"The government should not believe the doomsday story of Mr. Barton that the call center business will be adversely affected," he said.

Government backer

Despite AT&T's "doomsday" stories, the National Telecommunications Commission is throwing full support behind the local carriers.

NTC common carrier authorization department head Edgardo Cabarios, however, noted that the local carriers should still sit down and negotiate with AT&T.

"There's no question about it. We support the local carriers, but we want them to continue to talk with AT&T, as we believe that nothing can't be resolved through negotiations," he said.

He added that the NTC could also help bring together AT&T and the local carriers for an "informal discussion" of their differences, but that it could not "formally" compel the American carrier to sit down and negotiate as it had no jurisdiction over it.

Being an American carrier, AT&T falls under the jurisdiction of the FCC.

AT&T's Barton had expressed an intention to go higher up the government hierarchy by bringing the case to the level of the Department of Transportation and Communications.

The NTC is an agency attached to the DOTC.

Waiting with bated breath

While the termination rate war ensues, consumers wait with bated breath for how the whole thing can possibly affect them.

As far as the local telecommunications firms were concerned, they were not blocking AT&T traffic bound for the Philippines, so Filipinos abroad wanting to call their loved ones here should not encounter any problems.

Both AT&T and the local carriers want this issue resolved at the soonest possible time. As for how to go about its resolution, only time will tell.

And, as has been said, open communication lines do a lot to solve problems. Telecommunications firms should know.

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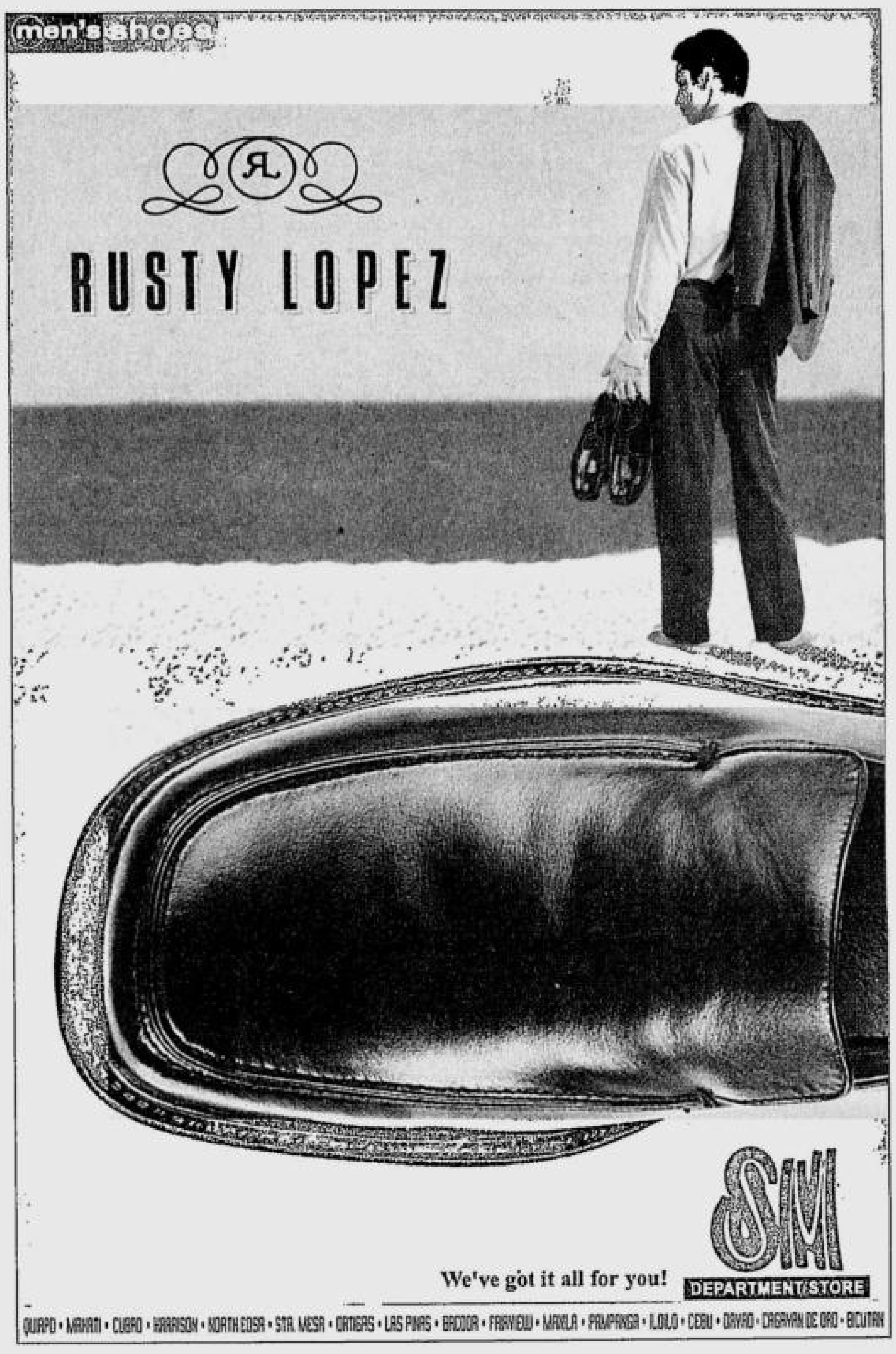
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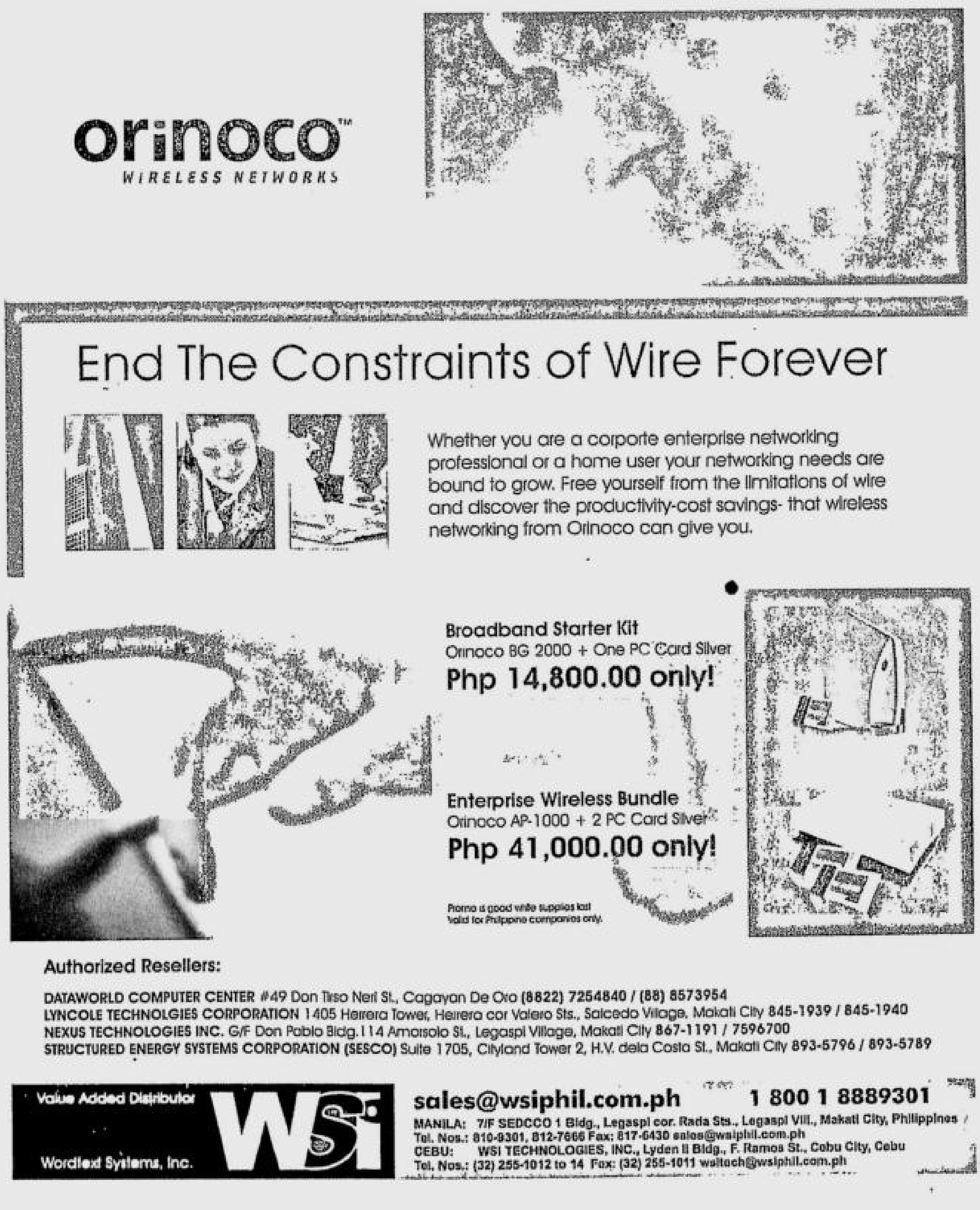
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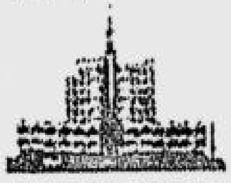

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NUESTRA-DIAJADE PAWNSHOP
LAS PINAS METRO MANILA
Will have its auction sale on March 07, 2003. All unredeemed pledges during the month of October 1-31, 2002. Diajade Main-9:30am; Diajade Br. II-10:30am; Diajade Br. I-1:00pm.
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Notice of Lost - ACR#E052593 ICR275430 issued to Robert Teng See (PDI-Feb. 24, 25, '03)

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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
MAYNILA, PILIPINAS
DISBURSEMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will conduct a bidding for 1-Lot Supply, Installation and make-operational Four (4) units Intelligent Peripheral Equipment (IPE) Shelf and accessories for Northern Telecom Meridian Option 61C per BSP scope of works and specifications.

Interested bidders must submit photocopies of the following documents, original of items 1, 2 and 6 to be presented for authentication purposes, not later than March 11, 2003 to the Manager II, Procurement Division II, Administrative Services Department, Rm. 213, 2nd Floor, 5-Storey Building, corner A. Mabini and P. Ocampo Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila, Telephone Nos. 536-5965/524-8229.

1. Articles of Incorporation and Business Registration Papers;
2. Y2001 Audited Financial Statements (Balance Sheet with a networth of P4,000,000.00 and working capital of P2,000,000.00 & Income Statement);
3. Y2001 Income Tax Return;
4. Company history / profile / e-mail address;
5. List of local clients (complete with addresses and telephone / fax numbers); and
6. Certificate of authorized distributorship (Contractor must be a certified Northern Telecom distributor and parts / service provider).

Only those who submit/comply with the above requirements will be invited to participate in the actual bidding which will be conducted on a later date to be advised. The two-envelope system shall be adopted in the bidding. Bidding documents may be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00

The BSP hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, as well as to waive any defect or informality in such bids, and to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

For the Disbursement Control Committee
(Sgd.) EDUARDO L. MAGAHIS
Director

(PDI – Feb. 25, 2003)

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February 21, 2003

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 to 2610 and other related provisions of the Tariff and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended, in relation to CMO 36-01, there will be a **PUBLIC AUCTION SALE** to be conducted at the 2nd Floor, Customs Hearing Room, MICP, North Harbor, Manila, on March 7, 2003 of the hereunder articles in lots. Said goods shall be available for public viewing on March 3, 2003.

Lot No.	Description	Last Floor Price	Recommended Floor Price
078-02	Used Mercedes Benz, blue	Php360,000.00	Php288,000.00
079-02	Used Daimler Jaguar, green	Php760,000.00	Php608,000.00
104-02	Used Mercury Buick, 1987	Php160,000.00	Php128,000.00
105-02	Used BMW, silver	Php200,000.00	Php160,000.00
106-02	Used Mercedes Benz, blue	Php280,000.00	Php224,000.00
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(PDI – February 25, 2003)

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NOTICE FOR PUBLIC HEARING/CONSULTATION

Notice is hereby given that the Department of Energy will conduct a public hearing/consultation on the draft Implementing Rules and Regulations for the guidelines on the implementation of the Executive Order No. 232 (EO 232) on February 28, 2003, 9:00 A.M. at the Board Room, 5th Floor, Building 6, Philippine National Oil Company, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Interested parties will be given opportunity to be heard and to present evidence in support of their positions. For particulars, please inquire at the office of Director Teresita M. Borra of Energy Utilization Management Bureau, Department of Energy, Tel. Nos. 840-1401 locals 245, 291, 290 and 337.

(Sgd.) BEN-HUR C. SALCEDO
Undersecretary

(PDI – Feb. 25, 2003)

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"One thing I ask of the Lord; this I seek; to dwell in the Lord's house all the days of my life ..."
Psalm 27:4

GENEROSO "Gene" FERNANDO-ACOSTA, SR.

Peacefully joined his Creator on the 22nd day of February 2003 at the age of 85.

His loving wife **LIDUVINA (Luding)**; children **KATHY, BERNIE, MARISSE, CYNDEE, LENEE, SONNY, MARGIE**; sons-in-law **RAFFY, CHET, HENRY, RICKY, BOB, GLEN**; daughter-in-law **MARI**; grandchildren **PATRICK**, married to **CIR-ANN, JEFFREY, PAULO, PAMELA (†), JANETTE, MARIJO, PEBBLES, SHARA, EARL, KRISTINE, PEACHES, CARLA, MICHELLE, MICAELA, ADRIAN, JONATHAN, BRIAN, SAMANTHA, JULIAN, NATHAN**; great grandchildren **ERIN MARIE, CAILA ANN**.

We, his family and all his other relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at **Chapel Hope, Don Bosco Makati**.

Interment will be on **Thursday, February 27, 2003** at the **Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City** after the **9:00 AM** requiem Mass at **Don Bosco Church, Makati City.**

The Law Class of 1974
University of the Philippines

Joins the Family of the late

NANETTE R. DE CASTRO

In praying for the eternal repose of their classmate.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe on Tuesday, February 25, 2003.

The following day, the remains will be brought home to Bulan, Sorsogon where necrological services will be held at the R. G. de Castro Colleges on Friday, February 28, 2003 at 8:00 a.m. Final Mass will be held at the Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Bulan, at 10:00 a.m.

Interment will follow at the Bulan Civil Cemetery.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
Philippians 1:21

Rufo Manalo de Borja

Mayor, Sta. Cruz, Laguna (1960 – 1980)
U. P. Law Class '55

Peacefully joined his Creator on February 24, 2003 at the age of 82.

His beloved wife Dely, children Dulce and Dave Coyukiat, Pablo (Boy) and Marilou de Borja, grandchildren Ivi and Marco Valera, Carlos, Alice, Anna Melissa, Jayboy and JP, brother and sisters, in-laws, nephews, nieces and relatives request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains will be at the Santuario de San Jose, East Greenhills until Thursday noon, February 27, 2003. His ashes will be interred at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine.

CONSORCIA O'SANTOS NER

Died peacefully on February 22, 2003 at the age of 85

Her children **Nelita (†)** and **Caesar**; daughter-in-law **Jeanette**; grandchildren **Zarah, Noe** and **Mark**; grandson-in-law **Hilton**; and great grandchild **Isabella** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 26, 2003 at 3 p.m., Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

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So fondly remembered...
So missed...

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ATTY. FELIX ROJAS SOLOMON

of Alfonso, Cavite & Fairview Park, Quezon City

Devoted Husband and Father,
JAGS PC, Colonel, (Ret.)
Lay Eucharist Minister of the Holy Eucharist,
Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, Fairview, Q.C.,
Gintong Ama Awardee 2000,

who peacefully joined our Creator on February 22, 2003.

The family requests the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul. His remains lie at Chapel 7, New Bldg., La Funeraria Paz, Inc., G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Cremation rites will be on Saturday, March 1, 2003 at 10:00 a.m., after the Necrological Mass at 9:00 a.m. at La Funeraria Paz, Inc.

Interment of the ashes will follow at the Ossuary of the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, Fairview, Q.C.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
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Joined his Creator and his beloved wife **GLORIA VILLANUEVA** *on February 21, 2003 at the age of 81.*

His children and their spouses **CARINA & NAP LATOSA, GERRY & ZENY MARAVE, CYNTHIA, HENRY & STAR DE JESUS, SUZZETT**; grandchildren **ANGEL, GLORESE, JOSINE & VINCENT SALVADOR LATOSA & RIANNE** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the **Arlington Memorial Chapels**, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 1, 2003 at the **Loyola Memorial Park**, Marikina after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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Making Philippines a vital global contact center hub

By Charles E. Buban

JUST a few years back, a call center was barely part of our lexicon. Although a number of them have been here for quite some time, they have gone almost unnoticed. Until recently.

Today, the country is home to around 30 contact centers servicing major global firms from the United States, Europe, Australia and Singapore.

Ideal location

The number is still few but the emergence of the Philippines as an ideal location for contact centers has been an important development that analysts say is the country's best bet to place itself in the global map.

According to Jones Lang LaSalle, the country's call centers projected revenue is expected to grow from U$173 million in 2002 to U$42 billion by 2010 while the number of customer service representatives is likely to grow from the current 10,000 to 150,000 by the end of the decade.

Jones Lang LaSalle is a leading global provider of comprehensive real state and investment management services.

Growing trend

"This is part of a glowing trend we've noticed of call center vendors deciding that, after a long period of emergence, the Asian market—hopefully the Philipines—has become a critical part of any long-term growth strategy for telecom providers," said Carlos Rufino, director of 19-1 Realty whose flagship project Net One Center became home to Connect2 Philippines, a call center based in the United States.

Some key factors that attracted these call centers to the Philippines, remarked Jones Lang LaSalle, are rooted in the basic requirements of the outsourcing business which on a global basis, thrives on cost optimization and value addition—areas where the Philippines ranks extremely high.

These factors include:

- A highly educated populace (94.6 percent literacy rate)
- A skilled labor force (20 percent of annual graduates are from IT/Computer Science-related disciplines)
- A competitive operating costs structure (25 to 40 percent estimated savings)
- A reliable infrastructure (availability of route and vendor redundancy)

Less labor cost

In North American and European call centers, labor makes up 60 percent to 70 percent of operating expenses.

"Compared that to the Philippines whose labor cost is mere 10 percent to 20 percent of those in the United States, the savings is indeed outstanding," said Rufino.

The Philippines' large, educated workforce is another factor that attracts potential investors.

According to Jeremy Smith, Jones Lang LaSalle country head for the Philippines, the country possesses all the essential qualities that make it an attractive location for setting up contract center services such as a fairly skilled and fluent English-speaking workforce, good quality infrastructure and a competitive wage structure of contact center personnel.

This lack of facility of the English language is what keeps China from the competition. With an immensely huge resources, the country has all the potential to compete and eventually lead, a reason why the Chinese government is going all out by having English taught in secondary schools.

Stiffer competition

"Once these students enter the workforce in a few years, call centers would be looking at a much stiffer competition: the more reason we should seize the moment while we still have the advantage," urged Rufino.

Indeed, more than technology, the call industry is really about the quality of service.

The country's industry players are hopeful the quality of education will improve further so that more graduates would be able to communicate well and understand what their company's product is all about and in the end be able to give the right solutions to their customer's needs.

They are hopeful to secure more key players within the next two to three years, a window of opportunity they want to take advantage of.

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Working with your real estate broker

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

BUILDING DREAMS

THE LAST two columns explained how a real estate broker works. Our readers have asked whether there are certain qualifications for real estate brokers or if anybody can just become a real estate broker.

Real estate brokers are licensed professionals and they are there to help and guide you through your real estate transactions. Selling and buying real estate can be a complicated matter and it may be a prudent choice to ask for the services of a qualified real estate broker.

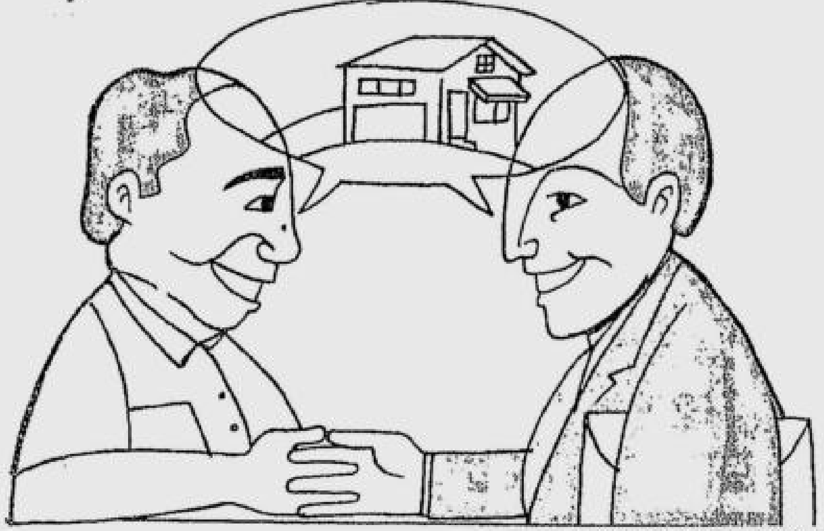
ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

License acquisition

Real estate brokers are engaged in the selling and buying of real estate in behalf of a principal or owner. The broker expects a commission or a fee by negotiating for the sale, lease, purchase, mortgage or joint venture of real estate properties. Real estate brokers get their license from the Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection, which is under the Department of Trade and Industry.

The BTRCP, through its director, has the main responsibility of setting the standards of real estate practice in the country. It administers the real estate brokers licensure exam twice a year and it qualifies and approves real estate practitioners for licensing. It is concerned with consumer protection, welfare and education.

The BTRCP also protects the public from dishonest and erring realty practitioners. It makes sure that real estate brokers act within the highest ethical standards. It prescribes standards and qualifications of real estate practitioners. Should real estate brokers violate the code of ethics of real practice, their licenses may be revoked or suspended by the BTRCP. Unethical acts include misrepresentation, misappropriation and giving out misleading information on properties that real estate brokers handle. Hence, it is best to deal only with a licensed real estate professional. If a real estate agent does not have a license yet, it is advised that they take the licensure exam that will be given this year.

Brokers and salesmen

Real estate brokers are licensed professionals who have to pass a government administered licensure exam. They are expected to be well versed with the ins and outs of real estate buying and selling including the pertinent legal aspects and should always protect the interests of both the buyer and the seller. To update their knowledge, brokers are required to attend a certain number of continuing education programs for them to be able to renew their licenses.

Real estate salesmen work for and in behalf of a licensed real estate broker. They can also negotiate for the sale, lease, mortgage or exchange of real property in exchange for a share in the commission or fee.

Realty brokerage practice

The practice of real estate brokerage involves the following:

- **The sale of a property**—hence the broker looks for a buyer.
- **The purchase of a property**—the broker looks for a seller.
- **The mortgage of a property**—the broker assists the borrower to secure a loan from a bank, financial institution or a lender.
- **The exchange of a property**—a broker looks for two or more property owners that would exchange their property.
- **The lease of a property**—the broker looks for a tenant that would occupy a property that is for lease.

Most real estate brokers are engaged in the process of selling and buying of real estate. This involves raw land, subdivision lots, house and lots, and commercial property. Brokers provide professional service in making sure that the seller and buyer in a real estate transaction would satisfy their needs and protect their own interests.

Other real estate brokers specialize in lease property and they are continuously looking for property for lease at the same time searching for tenants to occupy such property. Hence they are experts in the landlord-tenant or the lessor-lessee relationships. They make sure that both parties understand the terms and conditions of the lease contract. They even help the tenant move in to the new property as they make arrangements also for moving in and furniture handling services.

Selling, buying real estate

Some sellers and buyers would want to transact directly with principals. This is possible but unless one is a seasoned real estate dealer, it might be a wise move to ask for the services of a real estate broker. Most brokers specialize according to a specific geographical area and the broker may know information that the ordinary buyer might not have any knowledge. This information may include the number of homes available for sale, the market value or the average selling price per square meter, the selling price of the recently sold real estate, the homeowners association rules and regulations, and the problems within the subdivision. Since these brokers specialize in a geographical area with their own network of co-brokers, they can give a prospective buyer a lot of valuable information and insight in selecting the best property for them.

Some buyers and sellers of real estate have the impression that they can save money by not engaging the services of a real estate broker expecting that the commission that is to be paid to the broker will be given as a discount to them. But a professional broker will make sure that the property being sold is at a fair market price, the transfer of ownership is possible and that there is no lien or annotation on the title, and the person selling the property is the real owner or the duly authorized representative. Your broker will also explain to you the advantages and benefits of the property that you may be considering.

Real estate brokers get an authority to sell from a seller in order for them to be able to negotiate for the sale of a real estate property. In this document, the description of the property is written including the rate of commission and the duration of the authority. Some sellers get offended when a broker asks for this authority but they should understand that there are also common problems between the broker and seller relationships. The most common is that the seller, after being helped by a broker to sell the property does not give the commission. If there is a written agreement, at least both parties are protected.

As the owner of real property, you may be able to sell your real estate on your own. But considering the expertise and advice that your broker can give you, it might be to your advantage to work with a competent and trustworthy broker.

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'Columbariums' more practical than burial plots, says developer

By Tessa R. Salazar

WHEN your time comes, would you like to be buried or burned? Perhaps economics can answer that for you.

A concept that appeals more to nontraditional thinkers, a columbarium is a place where the urns of the "cremains" are kept.

Due to economics, and increasingly congested populations, developers of columbariums, or crematoriums, believe the columbarium is the answer to the need for the wise use of land.

Nestor C. Chavez, chief marketing officer of a columbarium called Caelum (pronounced as chelium, which means the sky or heaven), revealed Caelum is more economical by at least 25 percent compared to burial lots.

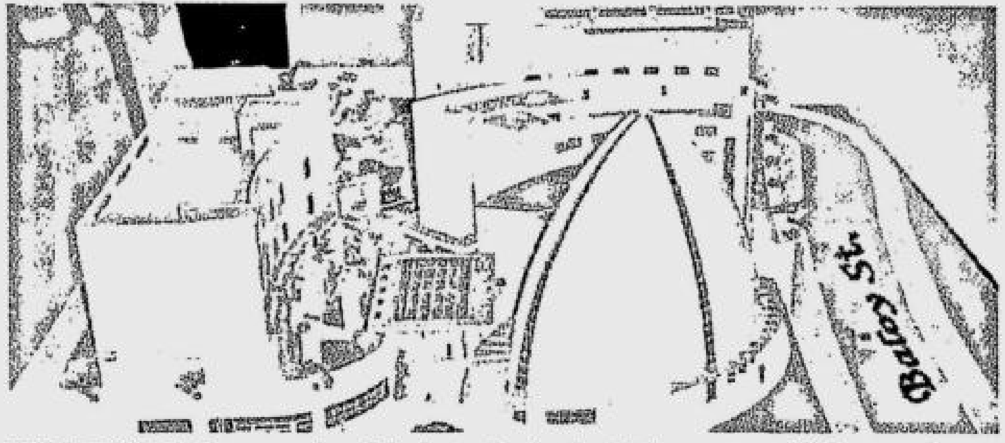
Price comparison

He said the average price per niche (or vault) in a columbarium is P60,000 (where four urns in a niche can fit). If in such cases, this would cost P15,000 per urn. One urn contains the remains of one person.

Burial plots, on the other hand, now cost around P55,000 to P60,000—and is only good for two. An additional cost of about P16,000 is required for interment excavation and filling.

Columbariums, furthermore, offer versatility in its concepts. A columbarium can house both a crematorium and a funeral parlor. In terms of structure, it can be set up as one structure that could house niches in several floors.

Caelum, which is under construction, is to be conceived differently even from other columbariums. The idea, Chavez said, revolves around making Caelum feel less of a funeral parlor and more of a place that is serene, with hotel-like amenities.



THE ARCHITECT'S perspective of the first columbarium in the country with three settings

3 settings

Chavez claimed that this would be the first columbarium in the country with three settings: garden, church and building. The garden setting has a touch of a memorial park. The church setting is an improvement of the church catacombs. The building setting is patterned after the columbariums found in Japan and Hong Kong.

Located at the corner of Araneta Avenue and Baloy Street, Caelum has for its project manager AP Canlas and Associates, which is owned by former DPWH deputy minister Aber Canlas.

Pioneering project

Caelum is the pioneering project of developer Jardin de Paradiso Properties Inc. Caelum's first phase is scheduled for completion in January 2004, but for at-need requirements, it has a tie-up with Manila Memorial Park in Marikina where urns could be temporarily kept. RMJM Philippines executed the architectural design.

The first phase of the whole project will cost P250 million and the total project land area is 4,265 sq. m.

Accepted practice

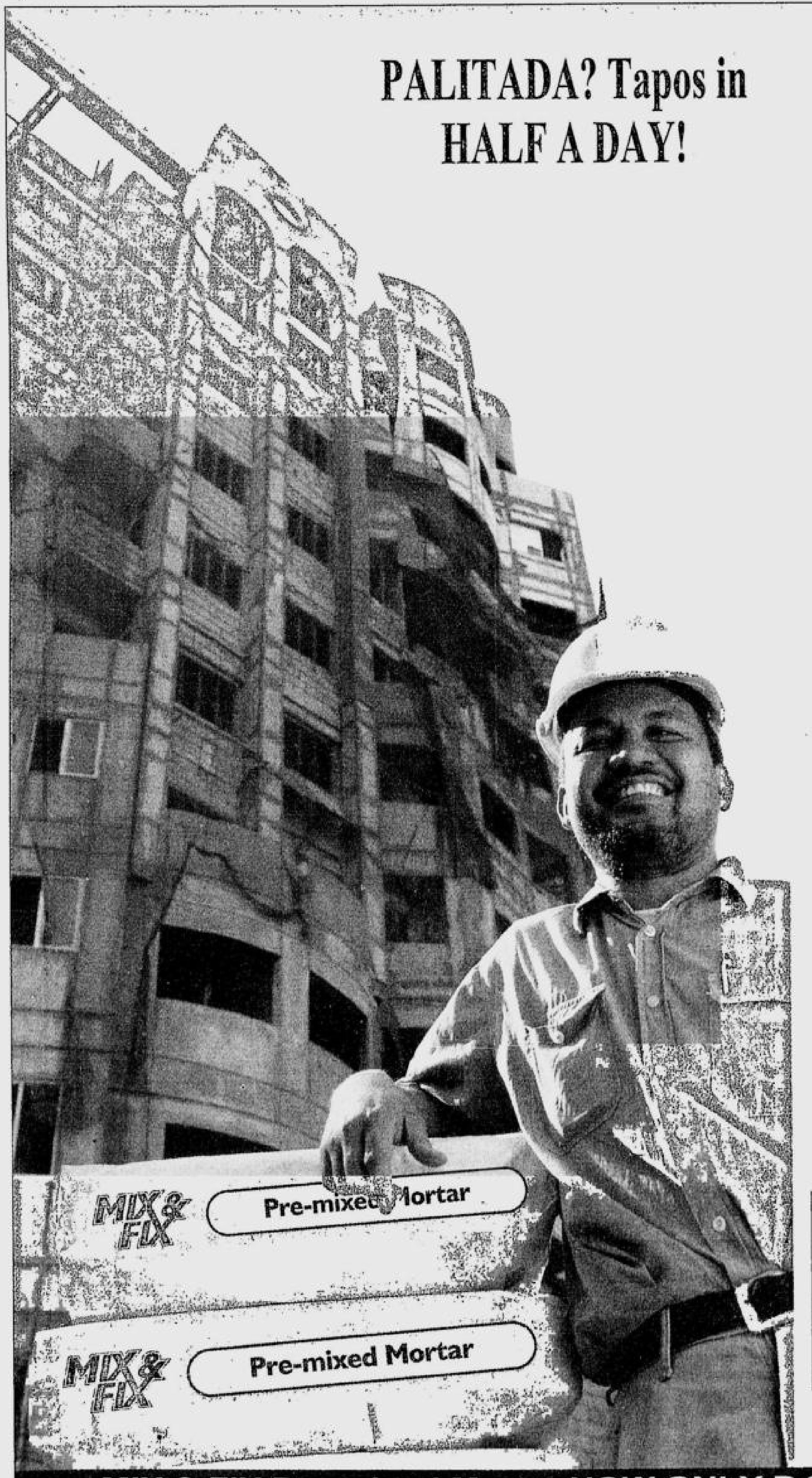
Cremation is now an accepted practice and had been endorsed by the Catholic Church as early as May 1963 with the following liturgical guidelines:

- The urn should not be kept permanently at home. It should be eventually kept in a grave, mausoleum or columbarium.
- Scattering the ashes is not in accordance with church norms.

Crematoria could be found in nearby provinces like Laguna and Dagupan. In Metro Manila, they can be found in Funeraria Paz, Loyola (Guadalupe), Loyola (Marikina), Manila Memorial Park and Eternal Garden.

Caelum's prices are designed to tap the A and B markets. However, it also offers affordable packages for the C market. Its buyers are predominantly in the 36 to 55 age bracket. Females represent 61 percent of its buyers.

Chavez himself owns a unit at Caelum.



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Realizing 'dream homes' at Ayala Westgrove Heights

THE TERM "dream home" has become a paradox in today's world, considering the spiraling values of houses and lots, worsened by the inconsistent downturn of the peso. Thus, dream houses remain as such—owners can only afford to dream about them.

Erwin Meer though, thinks otherwise. He claims to have found, and is now actually residing in his own dream house. In fact, he is now relishing the experience on a day-to-day basis, as if it were a surreal dream. His picture-perfect home stands on an equally utopian location—the suburbs south of Metro Manila. Erwin recently completed his dream home at the Ayala Westgrove Heights, a high-end residential development characterized by abundant greenery, rolling terrain and surrounded by thousands of mango trees, situated in Silang, Cavite.

Perfect site

The site of Westgrove Heights is perfect for Erwin and his family. Said Erwin: "Manila is so saturated and polluted already. It's not conducive anymore as a place to bring up a family. Since the metropolis is now expanding particularly southward, it's but proper to consider living in these areas now."

Erwin is at present connected with the electronics industry. His workplace in Alabang is only minutes away from his home in Westgrove Heights, which is also one reason he believes the site is perfect.

With his young wife Diane, also 38 years old, they are starting a young family, including four little children—all boys—aged 3 to 11.

Bonus

Since there are not many residents and moving vehicles in phase 4 of the subdivision, the couple feels secure about the safety of their kids. In fact, Erwin was one of the first homeowners to finish construction of their house in phase 4, for which they were recently awarded by Ayala a cool P1,000,000 incentive.

"The bonus was one-of-a-kind incentive, and it was actually one of the come-ons to convince me to complete the construction of the house immediately. We've also seen how Ayala cares for its community by coming up with events to foster camaraderie among homeowners. That's how I found this place," he related.

Said Erwin: "Last March, as one of the lot owners, we were invited to participate in a luau event at the clubhouse, and from there, we looked around and found a new phase of the property that they were opening. I instantly fell in love with the place, because of the cool weather and the impressive amenities. By April, I've bought my own lot already."

Dream home for real

Crisanto dela Rosa was hired as architect and design consultant, and in five months, the dream home the family has always wanted was finally realized. The family was even able to spend last year's holidays in the new two-story, six-bedroom home. Utilities are provided already, including deep well-treated water, satellite TV, Globe lines and electricity—all of which are found underground.

Added Erwin: "I now look forward to going home, to savor the quietness and fresh air, unlike before when I was always harassed by the metro's traffic and pollution. When I get inside the subdivision, it's totally a different setting from urban communities, because the utilities are all underground. The weather is cool and windy all the time, especially at night, so it's even better than Tagaytay. It's a worthwhile investment, a good buy, and it's our dream home, for real."

Erratum

IN LAST week's story titled "Group promotes green architecture," the first paragraph should have appeared: "ARCHITECT Prosperidad Luis, immediate past national president of the United Architects of the Philippines and current UP dean of the College of Architecture, appointed architect Amado P. De Jesus Jr. chair of the UAP Green Architecture Movement."

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Changing face of the food pyramid

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

ALTHOUGH the 1992 Food Guide Pyramid was designed to be a visual tool to teach people how to eat a healthy diet, it did its fair share of confusing people about what and how much to eat.

Perhaps the biggest shortcoming of the pyramid was that many people thought they could have limitless quantities of bread, rice, pasta, bagels, crackers and other grain products because these types of food were at the bottom of the pyramid. Not too many people made the distinction between whole grains and refined carbohydrates because most failed to read the fine print.

Since fats and oils were at the tip of the pyramid, it reinforced the belief in the minds of the weight-conscious that any food without fat was healthy and non-fattening. The food industry, sensing a growing demand for low-fat and non-fat products, created a whole new "health food" market.

Critics have blamed the pyramid for the obesity woes of the United States and other westernized countries. One detractor said the pyramid had turned America into the great feeding trough of the world because of its emphasis on carbohydrate consumption.

However, the pyramid alone cannot be blamed for the increasing cases of overweight and obesity. Consider the fact that, in spite of placing fats, oils and sweets in the "eat sparingly" category at the tip of the pyramid, for many people this section represents the largest part of their daily diet.

CHANGING/ C2

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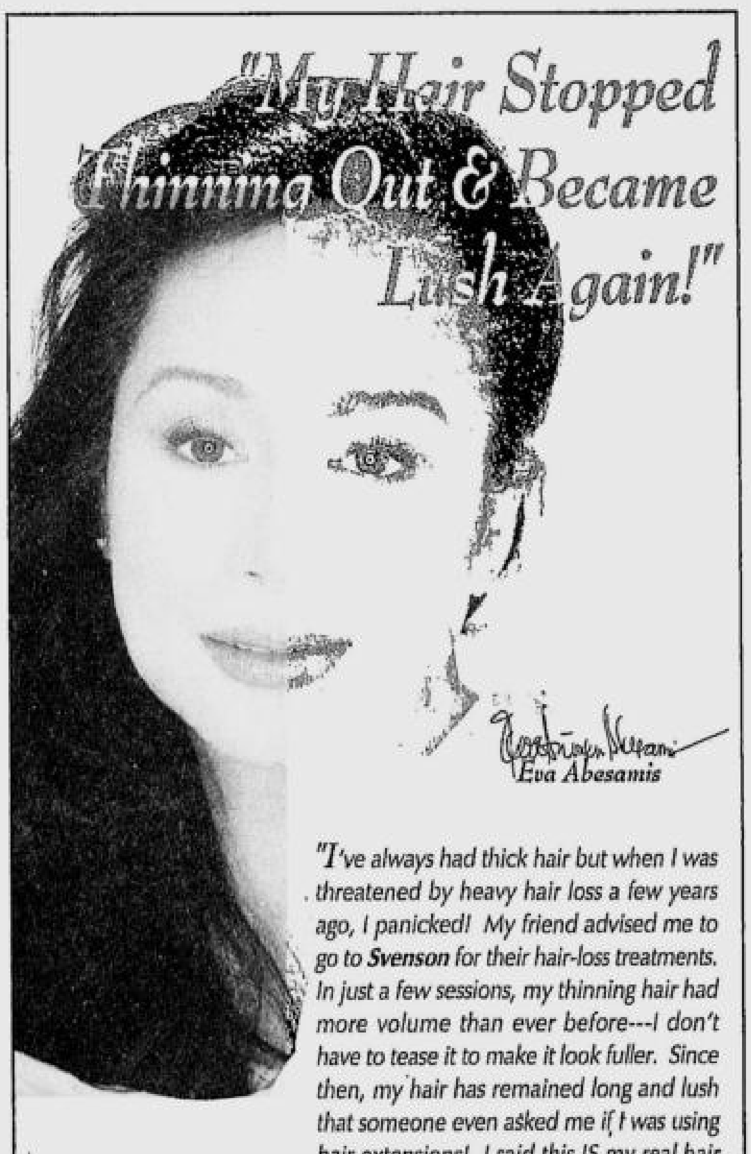
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Eva Abesamis

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Changing face of the food pyramid

From page C1

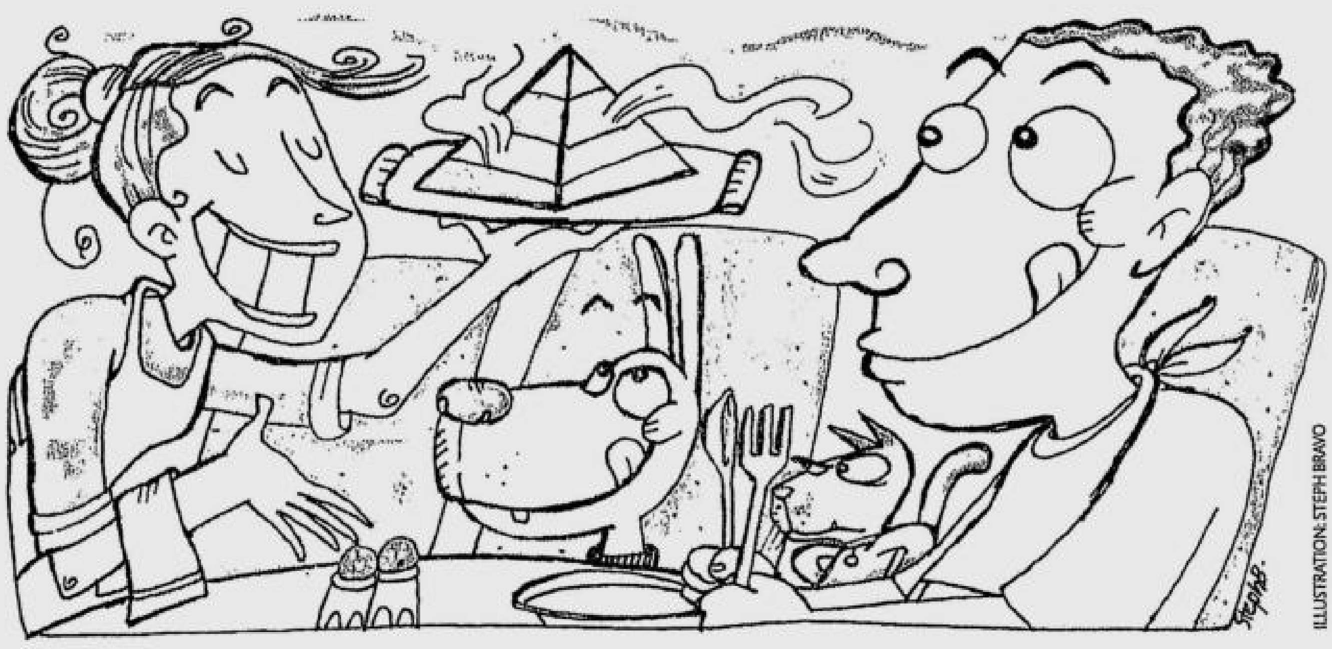


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Upside-down pyramid

The National Institute of Health found that only 1-3 percent of Americans actually followed the food pyramid on any given day. The University of Alabama discovered that food from the top of the pyramid made up almost half the daily diets of the children involved in the study. One science writer called it the "upside-down pyramid."

Millions upon millions of dollars are spent worldwide on fast food and junk food. Burgers, fries and soft drinks are loaded with saturated fat, trans-fat, and sugar. Creators of the food pyramid never recommended eating this fast food trio in abundance, but it continues to be a top-selling combo. The truth is that in spite of massive educational campaigns, majority of people base their food choices on their palate and budget.

But even though the pyramid is not the only scapegoat in the obesity blaming game, it is due for a major face-lift because new scientific findings have been unfolding in the field of nutrition. Unfortunately, the USDA won't release the revised pyramid until 2004.

Meanwhile, opponents of the pyramid are not sitting around waiting for the US government's official pronouncement and have created their own versions. One of them is Dr. Walter Willett, head of the Department of Nutrition in the Harvard School of Public Health, who created the Healthy Eating Pyramid. Lately, this alternative pyramid has been garnering much attention in talk shows, news reports and magazines. A few weeks ago, it was the cover story of Newsweek.

Correcting flaws

Willett says that his pyramid corrects many of the flaws of the current pyramid and more accurately reflects the latest nutritional finding. The old pyramid does not distinguish between whole and refined carbohydrates, lumps all fats together (whether from animal or plant sources), and groups red meat together with fish, poultry, beans and nuts.

The new pyramid separates carbohydrates into whole and refined sources, fats into saturated and unsaturated, and protein into nuts and legumes in one category and eggs, seafood and poultry into another one.

At the base or foundation of the new pyramid are "daily exercise and weight control." This is a confirmation that diet and exercise are conjoined twins that cannot be separated. It doesn't matter how well you eat if you don't stay active. It is also a realization that many chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and osteoporosis are associated with a sedentary lifestyle.

Healthy eating

The first level of the pyramid contains equal amounts of whole grain foods and plant oils, which are supposed to be eaten "at most meals."

The second level has vegetables (eat in abundance) and fruits (two to three servings a day).

The third and fourth levels are protein sources. The third level has nuts and legumes (two to three times daily) while the fourth level has eggs, fish, and poultry (zero to two times a day).

The fifth is the dairy section (one to two times a day). Here Willett offers an alternative—calcium supplement.

The "penthouse" of the new pyramid has two rooms. One for red meat and butter, and the other room has refined carbohydrates in the form of white rice, white bread, potatoes, sweets and pasta. Both categories should be "eaten sparingly."

Willett has based the design of the Healthy Eating Pyramid on large long-term studies done by Harvard involving thousands of people. He and his colleague Marjorie McCullough tested the new pyramid by examining the diets of people who were already eating in a similar manner and compared them with people who were following the USDA pyramid's advice.

Willett discovered that the people who ate according to his pyramid experienced a greater reduction in heart disease (39 percent for men and 28 percent for women) than those following the old pyramid (28 percent for men and 14 percent for women). There was no difference in both groups when it came to reduction of cancer risk. The results were published last December in the American Journal of Nutrition.

Although the Healthy Eating Pyramid is not the final word on what is the perfect diet and it has its own imperfections (like people may think they can use as much oil as they want as long as it comes from plant sources), it is still a big improvement compared to the USDA pyramid because it is more specific about the healthier sources of fat, protein and carbohydrates.

Next week: Carbs, fat and protein: The good and the bad

Watch "In Fitness & In Health" Monday to Friday on Studio 23 at 6-6:30 a.m. and on Net25, 6-6:30 p.m.

For questions and past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.com

Caring cards for the cure of breast cancer

THE IDEA of Caring Cards for the Cure is certainly inspired. It is Hallmark Card's way of helping women with breast cancer—a project it is undertaking together with the Zonta Club of Makati and Bosom Buddies.

Caring Cards for the Cure is both a gesture of caring and a reminder to all women to share in the responsibility of staying healthy and that early detection of the disease is critical to winning the fight against breast cancer, which is the leading cause of death for women between the ages of 40 and 59, and which afflicts one in eight women in one's lifetime.

Hallmark Caring Cards for the Cure comes with a two-part insert. "The sender of the card," said Maximo Licauco III, president of Filstar Distributors, the Hallmark licensee in the Philippines, "tears off the first portion of the insert and keeps it as a reminder for herself, while the second part will be enclosed in the cards, which she will give to someone she cares about."

The greeting card lines earmarked by Hallmark for the cause are called Tributes and Celebration of Women. "These heartwarming greeting card lines are appropriate for this project," said Licauco. "Tributes pays homage to the relationships that enrich one's life, while Celebration of Women supports, inspires and revels in the life stages and transitions that connect all women—singlehood, marriage and motherhood."

For every card sold, Licauco said, a portion will be donated to the Zonta Club of Makati and Environs Inc. for the procurement of anti-breast cancer medications.

"By sending Caring Cards for the Cure," Licauco stressed, "you will be spreading care and cheer to women whose lives you care about—your mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, relatives, friends and co-workers. But more than this... the joy of sending cards is equal to the joy of receiving them."

Hallmark's Caring Cards for the Cure are available until May at all National Book Store outlets nationwide.

Take Charge Doc!
Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.
MEDICard

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

What is tuberculin skin test, is it a covered procedure?

Tuberculin skin test is a test done to see if a person's body has ever carried (presence of) the Tuberculosis (TB) germs. It is done by injecting a small amount of a harmless substance called PPD Tuberculin just under the top layer of the skin on a person's forearm. It is not a vaccine shot. Within 24 to 48 hours, the presence of an induration measuring 10mm or more may indicate a positive reaction. A positive reaction means that TB germs are present in the body. Tuberculosis is a pre-existing condition (PEC). If you have coverage for PEC's and if Tuberculin test is to be done to determine or rule-out the presence of TB, then it is a covered procedure.

Meet your MEDICard Team

MEDICard members may seek the services of **Dr. Pamela A. Lagrosa**, our accredited specialist at Humana Medical Clinic. "Doktora Pam" specializes in Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery. She was conferred the degree of Doctor of Medicine and Surgery last May 1996 at the University of Santo Tomas and finished her ENT residency training at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center. She is a Diplomate of the Philippine Board of Otorhinolaryngology and is a member of the Philippine Medical Association. She enjoys reading, watching movies and jogging during her free time. For your consultation needs, drop by the Humana Medical Clinic, G/F King's Court II Bldg., Chino Roces Ave. (Pasong Tamo), cor. Dela Rosa Sts., Makati City, Mondays 8 AM to 6 PM, Tuesdays and Fridays 8 AM to 2 PM and Wednesdays 1 PM to 6 in the evening.

Urology is the specialization of recently accredited specialist **Dr. Cristopher F. Perez**. Dr. Perez is based at the Philippine Heart Center for Asia, East Avenue, Quezon City. He is a Medicine graduate of the University of Santo Tomas and took his residency training for his specialization at St. Luke's Medical Center. He is married to MEDICard accredited Ophthalmologist Dr. Gina Perez and has been blessed with three wonderful children. Members may visit him for consultations at his clinic Room 404, every Wednesdays from 1 to 3 PM and on Saturdays from 9 AM to 12 noon.

Patience is one of the virtues of MEDICard accredited specialist **Dr. Sonia C. Sim**. Dr. Sim, who specializes in Pediatrics, has more than 15 years of clinical experience. She is one of our "pioneer" medical service providers who joined our team in 1988. She finished Medicine at the Cebu Institute of Medicine and took her residency training for Pediatrics at EVR Medical Center. Doc Sonia is a loving wife and mother to her family of five. She also enjoys reading and dancing during her free time. Members may seek the services of Dr. Sim at her clinic Room 127, the Bethany Hospital in San Fernando, La Union. Her clinic schedule is from Mondays to Saturdays 10 AM to 12 noon and again from 3 to 5 PM.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availment of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 810-1503 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

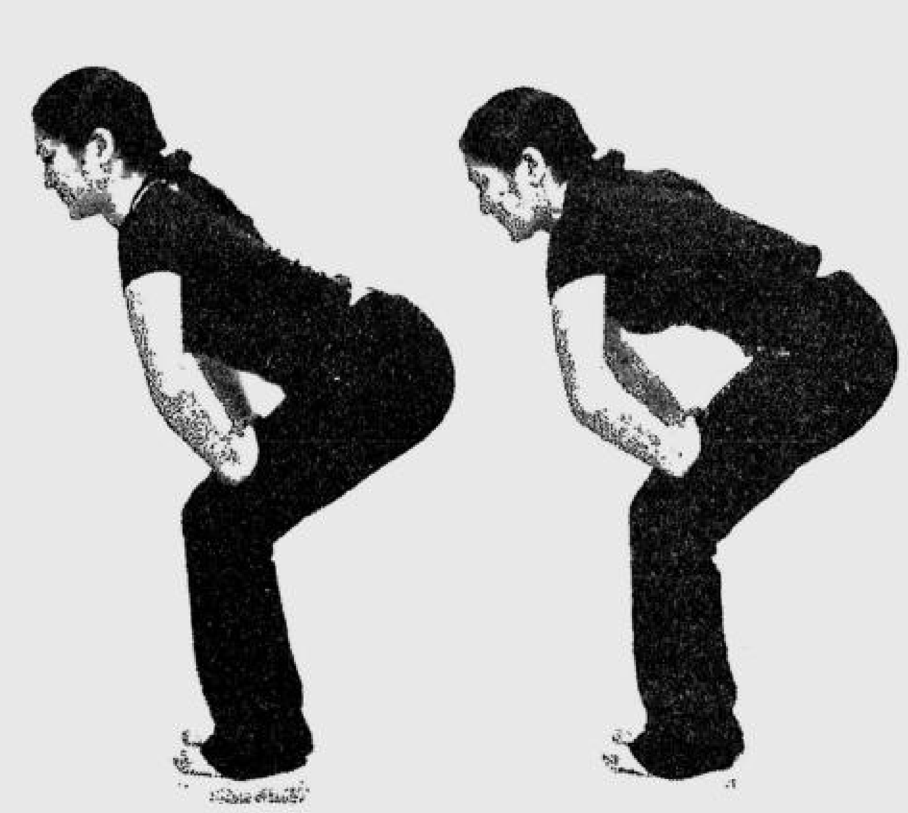
TEXT MEDICard for your queries: 0917-7518365 (Globe) or 0919-2476240 (Smart). Please don't forget to include your complete name and landline number where MEDICard could reach you. Log on to www.medicardphils.com.

MEDICard is the first and only HMO in the Philippines and the whole Asian region to be ISO 9002 certified.

ISO 9002

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Standing pelvic tilt



THIS exercise soothes aching lower backs by stretching the tight muscles in that area.

Equipment: None

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with feet hip-width apart. Come into a squat position by bending your knees and pushing your buttocks backwards. Place your hands on your thighs.
2. Pull belly button toward your spine as you tilt or curl your pelvis under.
3. Return to starting position.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you tilt pelvis under; inhale as you return to starting position.
2. When getting into the squat position, pretend that you are about to sit on a stool.
3. When you tilt your pelvis, imagine trying to bring the bottom of your hips toward the middle of your waist.

Repetitions:

You can do the exercise as a static stretch (hold the pelvic tilt for 15-20 seconds) or as a dynamic exercise (tilt and release for 10 repetitions).

Fundraiser brings hope to cancer patients

MARTIN Nievera and musical director Louie Ocampo's concert will surely bring hope and love to cancer patients and their doctors and nurses at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) tomorrow. Proceeds of the concert will benefit the newly-established Hope for Cancer Cure Foundation or HOPE.

PGH's Canter Institute admits charity patients for free and medical services and are also rendered pro bono, but patients have to pay for examinations such as CT-scans and drugs.

Visiting oncologist-consultant Dr. Sylvia Baumann Kurer formed HOPE together with PGH's oncologists.

HOPE members include Evelyn Ang, Drs. Beatrice Tiangco, Gerardo de Hitta Cornelio, Corazon Ngelangel, Alberto Romualdez, Marina Chua, Suzette Lason and Bill Ramos and Roberto Jayme, Carol Miller and lawyer Nilo Pena.

Initially, HOPE will only be able to take care of patients with testicular cancer and Non Hodgkin's lymphoma. Dr. Kurer explained that these two forms of cancer of the lymphatic tissue tends to afflict many young people in their 20s or 30s and the potential for cure is high, as much as 90 percent even in its advanced stage if treated properly.

The first recipient of HOPE's medical services is a 26-year-old housewife from Goa, Camarines Sur. Katrina Cano was first diagnosed after experiencing cancer-like symptoms. Her biopsy at the PGH Cancer Institute confirmed she had malignant Non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Fluids had to be drained from her lungs and chemotherapy was recommended.

HOPE has committed to help her conquer the Big C.

If you want to be a HOPE giver, call Arleen Siscar at 893-2647 or the Medical Oncology section of PGH at 526-3775. You can also deposit your donations to HOPE's bank account number, 0111-356241-200 at Security Bank on UN Avenue, Manila. All donations will be acknowledged.

Surviving the city

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

PREVENTION is indeed the key to long life. If you don't slow down, physical debilitation or mental exhaustion will get you in the end.

But can one survive the city's air, water and noise pollution? Or its frenetic pace which affects one's nerves? Since you can't escape the urban sprawl or its call, find an oasis where you'll experience less stress and peace of mind.

Time for yourself

It's time to take a break when:

- You've been more touchy than you normally are.
- Temper has become a constant companion.
- You're beginning to show signs of stress: puffy eyes and dark circles under the eyes, "worry" expression lines on the forehead, an unhealthy skin tone, lack of zest for anything, crying bouts and insomnia.

Make a firm decision, despite commitments that may hold you back. Break free now before it's too late. Spend some time to rehabilitate yourself.

Guide for the stressed-out

If you're in search of havens, places to lift one's spirits and soothe the body, visit Ink and Stone, a bookshop-cum-healing center, at The Podium, ADB Avenue, Ortigas.

Browse through a wide selection of titles on subjects ranging from spirituality, health and fitness, philosophy, travel. Absorb the wisdom of the Dalai Lama and Winston Churchill in one morning! Enroll in Pilates, yoga and meditation classes. Call 637-8221.

At David's Prestige, try its Sparoma-Therapy Massage, a combination of mood-lifting therapy and body tissue firming treatment. Call 633-7892.

Experience a new look at Hairbytes, tel. 632-9467.

Enjoy great coffee and conversation in places that also serve tea, like UCC Vienna Café, Dome, Figaro and Starbucks, which now offers soy milk.

Indulge in Cheesecake Etc.'s low-calorie selections, Cinnabon's cream-free twists and Goodies & Treat's fruit meringue tarts.

Experience the therapeutic effect of flowers at Holland Tulips.

Satisfy your hunger with low-fat dishes from Casa Armas. Try Bacalao Paella or Paella Negra. At Café Breton you can order cream-free, fat-free crepes.

Café Med and Pagliacci feature Italian favorites cooked in light olive oil.

Asian restaurants Banana Leaf and Penang offer many vegetarian delights.

Learn a new craft or perfect an old skill at Andoo-Hobbos or The Jigsaw Shop. Try the new 3D puzzles.

Gear up on your sports and fitness needs at Arena, Speedo, Nike Park and Bridgestone Golf.

Music amid the noise

Even if you're in the midst of chaos, there is a way to detach. Sit on a bench—in a mall, restaurant or park. Shut off the noise from your mind. Close your eyes. Listen to your inner music. Choose a tune that calms you. Hum it to yourself. Soon the tune will fill your body and your senses.

Morning wash

Gather petals of your favorite flowers. Wash them well. Mix in a bowl of chilled water. Splash on your face and sprinkle all over your body. Or, you can bathe in it. Feel the power of nature, fill your senses.

Love and light!

> Break free now before it's too late. Spend some time to rehabilitate yourself

Research shows nuts help prevent diabetes

EATING nuts, including pistachios, is now linked to the prevention of type 2 diabetes in women. Research published in the November 2002 Journal of the American Medical Association reports that women who ate an ounce of nuts or a tablespoon of peanut butter five or more times a week reduced their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 20-30 percent.

This is important news for diabetes prevention since, according to the American Diabetes Association, close to 17 million people in the United States have diabetes, and about one million adults are newly diagnosed each year. Recent studies have shown that diet and lifestyle modifications are important means of preventing type 2 diabetes, which is linked to cardiovascular disease, amputation, blindness and renal failure.

In addition, this study showed a linear relationship between consuming nuts or peanut butter and type 2 diabetes, which means that a higher consumption of nuts was related to a greater protective effect. So, for example, the group of women who consumed a 1-oz serving of nuts one to four times per week still had a 16-percent reduced risk of developing the disease.

While the researchers investigated nuts in general, all nuts, including pistachios, contain predominantly unsaturated fats and significant amounts of other nutrients like dietary fiber and magnesium that may contribute to maintaining balanced insulin and glucose levels. And, for those worried about calorie intake and weight gain, researchers recommend watching calories by substituting nuts for saturated fat foods or refined grain products. Although data from the study shows a higher calorie intake among nut eaters, there were no significant differences in body mass index in comparison to those who never or rarely ate nuts.

It is easy to switch to California pistachios as a nutritious and satisfying snack. A 1-oz serving—that's 47 pistachios according to the USDA—contains 160 calories and 11 g of unsaturated fat with only 1.5 g of saturated fat. And, pistachios are naturally cholesterol-free.

'Nata de coco' may help treat various ailments

A FILIPINO scientist cum researcher from Tarlac City, Antonio R. Agustin, has discovered a "cure" for kidney problems—*nata de coco*, which is also known as Boston-C.

A number of kidney patients have confirmed the efficacy of *nata de coco*.

Abel Alcantara, 31, from Biñan, Laguna, underwent dialysis for several years till he met Agustin who told him to take three glasses of Boston-C. Within three hours, he was discharging liters of urine, and after a week's time, his bowel movement became regular. He has also gained weight.

A 42-year-old woman from Cagayan de Oro City, whose left and right kidneys already collapsed, was also "cured" after taking Boston-C.

Reports have also shown that other patients suffering from various ailments like cancer, emphysema, diabetes or stroke, have recovered and are now leading normal healthy lives.

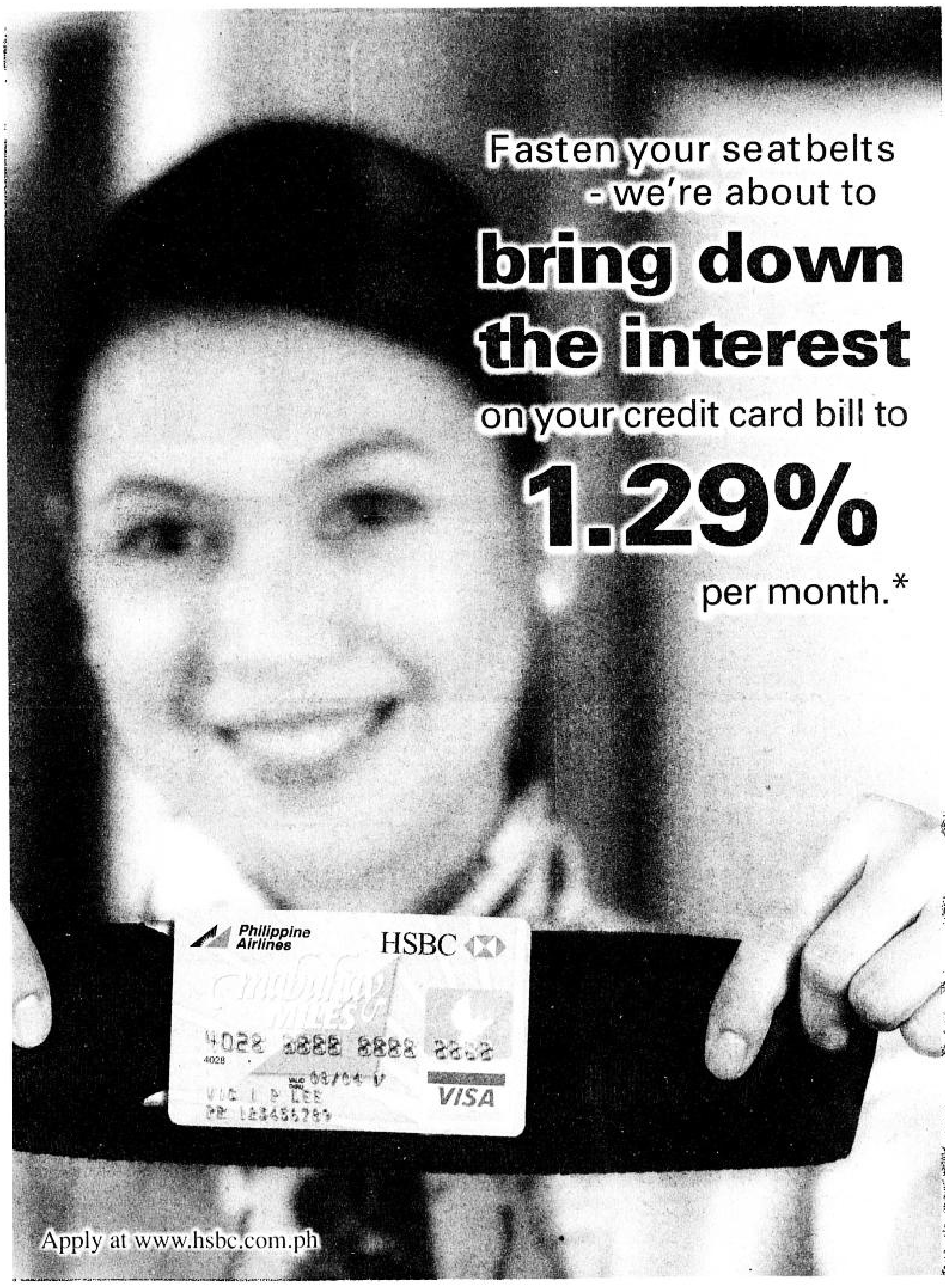
Call (045) 985-4068.

Pharmalink nat'l confab

PHARMALINK (PL), a division of Zuellig Pharma Corp. ZPC), is holding its national conference until today at the Rizal Ballroom of the Makati Shangri-La.

Attending the meeting are Mike Becker, president and CEO of ZPC; Brian Nichols, CEO of PL-Pacific Region; and Raymund Azurin, head of PL Philippine operations.

The awarding of medical reps and area managers who excelled in their field highlights the event. The conference ends today with a training-seminar for all 700 participants.



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Hurry! HSBC's Balance Transfer offer runs until **30 April 2003** only.

APPLY NOW AND START SAVING! CALL 864-1111.

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Arcana Fortune

Arcana Fortune*

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Hi-score 5000
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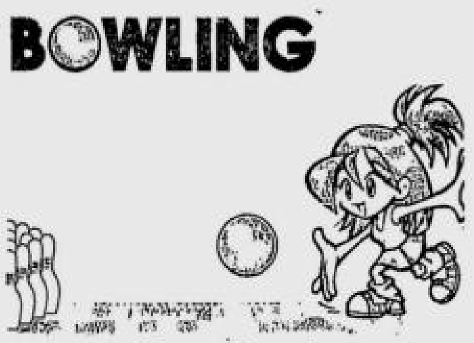
Exit

Arkanoid*

Bantumi



Bowling*

Bumper

Capcom

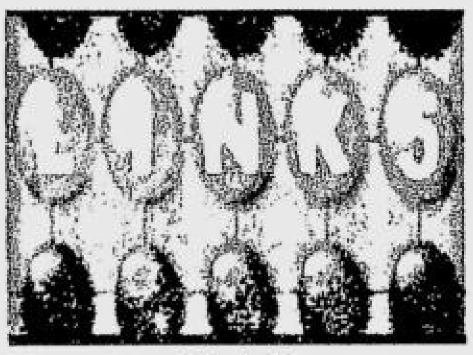
Dino Eggs*

Glider Action

Glider Action*

KART RACING

Kart Racing



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Magic Draw

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Mahjong

Mahjong*

Pairs II

PUZZLE
BOBBLE
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Puzzle Bobble*

RELAXZ
DRIVING GO GO

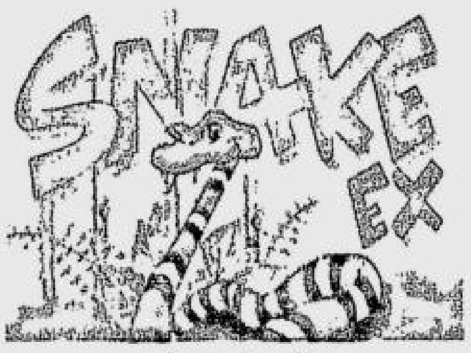
Relaxz*

Richman
American Tour

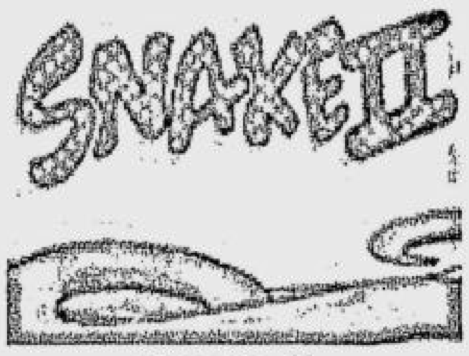
Richman*

COM2US
SEED

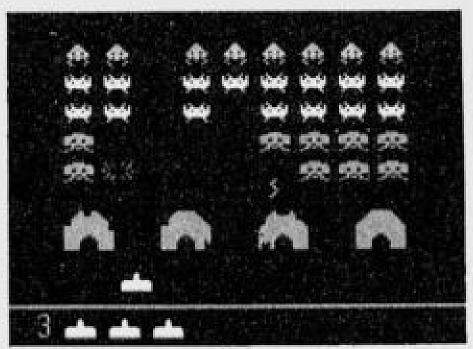
Seed*



Snake*



Snake II



Space Invaders*

Club Nokia
Credits
20
Welcome to www.club.nokia.com.ph

It's all in here.

Get all-out action in your Nokia phone with Club Nokia games!

At Club Nokia, you get access to exclusive games that you can download and enjoy in your Nokia phone. All you need is a Club Nokia Value Card, which will let you purchase exciting games only @ www.club.nokia.com.ph.

Here's how to use your Club Nokia Value Card: 1. After registration, go to the Club Membership Section. 2. Click on payment methods, "Club Nokia credits". 3. Enter your card number and hidden serial number in the fields indicated. 4. Click upload credits, your current balance will be displayed. 5. You are now ready to begin downloading. Have fun!

Club Nokia Value Cards are available at all outlets of Globotel, Hello, Memo Express, Selectronics, Mega Cellular Network Inc. and Nokia Care.

*Java games available only for Nokia 7210, Nokia 6610 and Nokia 6100.

ISUZU
Your responsible partner

The Challenges lives on in Cebu

ISUZU Philippines Corp. (IPC) wasted no time in jumpstarting this year's challenge with the Isuzu Challenge Cebu Leg.

In recognition of its customers' support and inspired by the success of the 2002 Isuzu Challenge, IPC strengthens Isuzu's thrust to Go Farther by making this year's challenge bigger, more exciting, and a whole lot more fun, covering four different parts of the country and culminating in a major event in November.

Last Feb. 8, the 2003 Isuzu Challenge kicked off in Cebu to the delight of Isuzu's Cebuano customers. A total of 32 participants signed up for the event, which was a whole day affair featuring an economy fun drive and exciting sports activities.

"We would like to give our customers and friends a taste of the extreme, all in the spirit of fun", relates Hiroshi Ishino, IPC's Executive Vice President. True enough, the participants had a grand time driving their Isuzu vehicles employing fuel-saving tips towards White Sands in Mactan Island, Cebu, where they were prepared to pit physical endurance and wits against each other at beach volleyball, kayaking, and flag capture.

Feeling like celebrities, the 32 participants were ferried to a lovely island named Coral Reef where they donned their Isuzu Challenge uniforms. Armed with a spirited sense of adventure, the fun-loving Cebuano participants gamely spiked the ball, paddled wildly to finish the kayak race, and had a wild time shooting each other with water guns in the strategic war game of flag capture. Tired but with big smiles on their faces, members of the declared champion Yellow Team claimed their trophies and prizes. Mr. and Ms. Isuzu Challenge were also selected to the cheers of the crowd.

The economy fun drive featured a carefully selected route —a scenic 89.3-kilometer drive starting from Isuzu Mandaue to a turnaround point in Catmon and finally culminating at the Shell Station in Lilo-an.

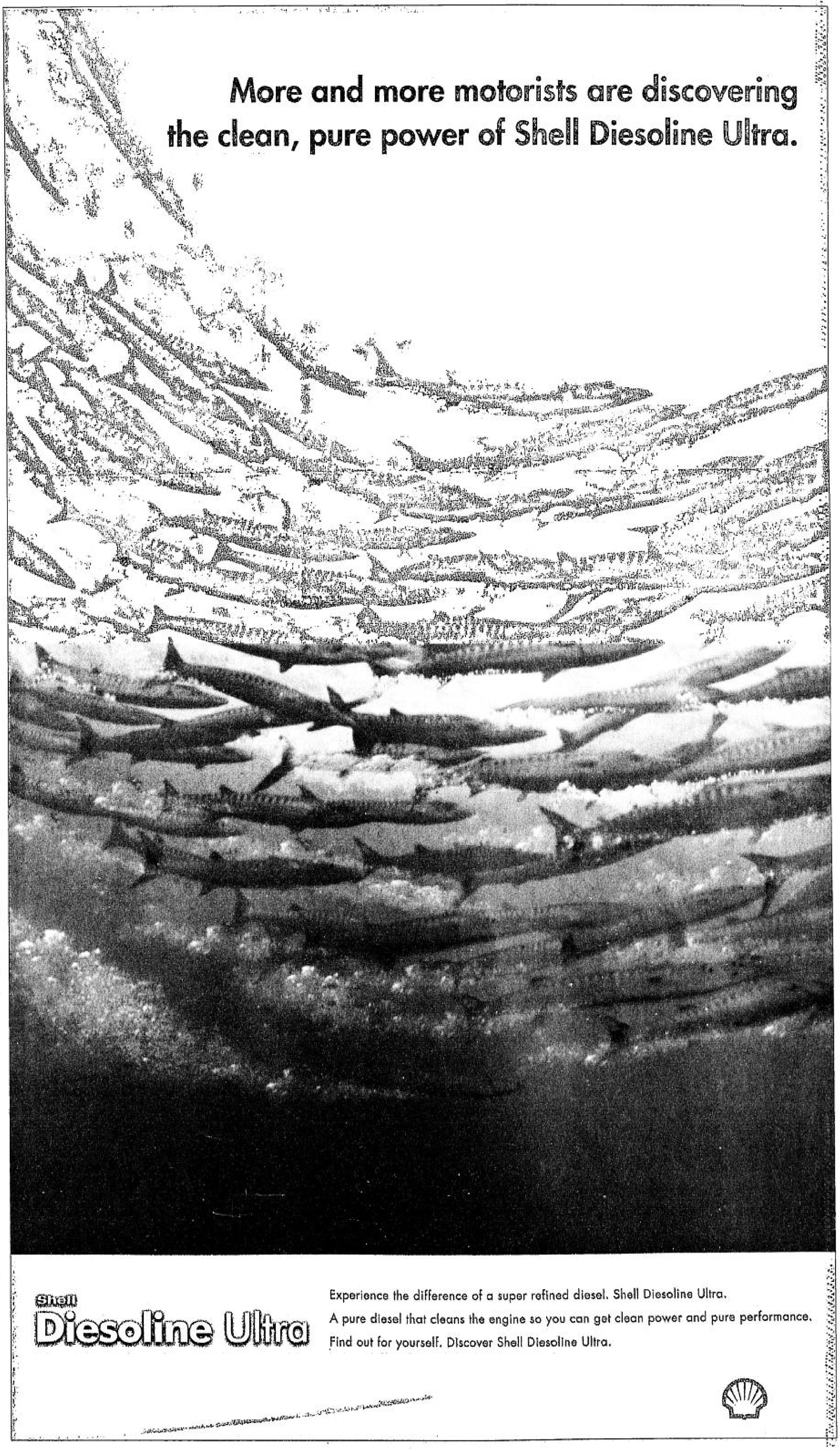
Anjo Perez of Manila Bulletin, a veteran of economy drives, bested the Crosswind M/T contenders using only 1.07 liters of diesel or 83.45 kilometers per liter. "A lot of people don't realize it, but vehicles can really achieve high fuel mileage if they just know how to drive economically and prepare their vehicles specifically for such purpose", Perez explains. "Plus, it helps if you're using an Isuzu", added Erle Sebastian of Today, who navigated for Anjo.

A notable winner is Vernon Sarne of REV Magazine, who topped the Crosswind A/T category two years in a row. Navigated by Lester Dizon of the Philippine Star/Gadgets Magazine, the duo logged 30.37 kilometers per liter. Meanwhile, owner Ryan Tan and navigator Carlo Sainz topped the Fuego M/T category with a fuel mileage of 27.91 kilometers per liter, and owner Francisco Maribao and navigator Allan Maribao dominated the Trooper A/T category with 27.73 kilometers per liter.

The results were validated by Antonio Labios of the Department of Energy, Allan Mercado of the Automotive Service Association, and Col. Vladimir Custer Kahulugan of the Regional Traffic Management of Cebu. The Shell fuel pumps were also calibrated twice during the competition.

The 2003 Isuzu Challenge is sponsored by Samsung, powered by Shell Diesoline Ultra and used WG&A Super Ferry as the official transport of the Challenge vehicles and crew. The next leg will be held in Isabela on March 30, 2003.

> The economy fun drive featured a carefully selected route —a scenic 89.3-kilometer drive starting from Isuzu Mandaue to a turnaround point in Catmon and finally culminating at the Shell Station in Lilo-an.



More and more motorists are discovering the clean, pure power of Shell Diesoline Ultra.

Shell
Diesoline Ultra

Experience the difference of a super refined diesel. Shell Diesoline Ultra.
A pure diesel that cleans the engine so you can get clean power and pure performance.
Find out for yourself. Discover Shell Diesoline Ultra.

ISUZU CHALLENGE 2003

Lingaw ni bai!

Dear Pido,

Hi! I know you're wondering why I'm writing. I just gotta tell you about this.

Sure you know of my numerous out-of-town encounters with people and nature but this was in a league of its own. I've read about the Isuzu Challenge but I was surprised when I got a call from Isuzu inviting me to join. They brought the Challenge to Cebu!

Our 89.3 km route of flat terrain happened on a Saturday. Feeling Rally driver at the steering wheel and Kuya Kokoy as the navigator, we thought we had it made on a 2-hour, 40-80 kph run to the finish line, we did a whopping 42 km per liter. Euphoria turned out to be short lived as final results revealed a Crosswind Manual transmission did 83.4 km/li. At the least though, I have to say that the e-figures are attainable under a controlled environment.

And the drive was just part of the Isuzu Challenge package of fun. After a sumptuous lunch, I got the feeling I was part of the Survivor Series. We were grouped into teams of 4 and ferried to Coral Reef where we took turns playing and competing against each other in 3 sports activities. I was a novice at kayaking but I took the cue from the instructor and paddled my way to the finish line. Kuya Kokoy and I had to roll out of the kayak as the activity provided a little stress on our bellies!

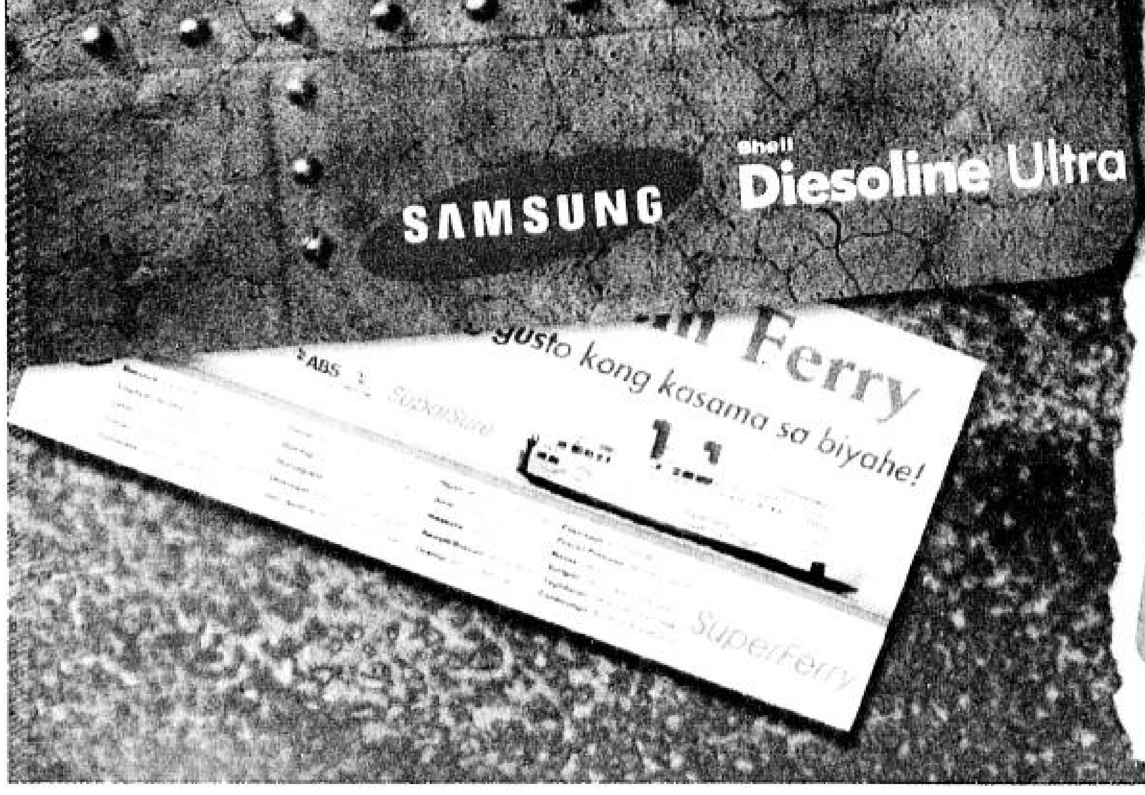
We then engaged ourselves in full battle gear for the flag capture. It's like playing paint ball with a twist as we had to uncover our ammos thru clues. I had a blast shooting down opponents with colored water. I can still hear roars of victory & sighs of frustration as I think of this event. Beach volleyball ended the streak for me. Our competition experience when we were university students in Manila proved useful as it helped me rally the team to an Olympic-like victory.

The challenge-filled day was capped by the usual awarding ceremonies. Cool prices like ₱10,000 cash, a Samsung DVD player and a free trip from WG&A SuperFerry were given away. Didn't win any though but I still am awed by the event, and how Isuzu actually went the extra mile to involve customers in their event.

Well, with the Isuzu Isabela announced as the next big leg and you in the area, it may be coincidence. But I can only think of two things right now- either you may be my navigator or you buy an Isuzu and make me your navigator when you get your turn participating in the Isuzu Challenge. Wait till you see the 8X10 collage photo that Isuzu will be sending me.

Ciao!

Dido



Isuzu Direct Injection Diesel Engine and Shell Diesoline Ultra

Isuzu and Shell --- two strong brands with cutting edge technologies in d
fused together in Isuzu Challenge 2003.

Isuzu's leading Direct Injection (DI) Diesel Engines produce power unde
hood with better efficiency in fuel consumption compared to Indirect Injec
still used by other automakers today. Direct Injection Diesel Engines puts
Isuzu vehicles in a class of its own whose stronghold is total combustion
unleashing more power with better fuel efficiency and cleaner exhaust.

Kicking-off in Cebu, the e-drive stage of this years' challenge was fuelled wi
Shell's Diesoline Ultra. As pronounced by Shell, Diesoline Ultra has prover
clean up capability of direct injection diesel engines by removing deposits th
inhibit power and efficiency. This feature complements direct injection diese
engine to perform at peak potential.

With fuel tanks filled to the brim with Shell Diesoline Ultra, the Isuzu vehicles driven by their owners and media who were given a course on fuel efficient driving techniques, logged record-breaking fuel efficiency performances as early as this years 1st of four legs.

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KICKS-OFF IN CEBU

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People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Ad firm fetes its clients on its 2nd year

CATALYTX Advertising recently hosted a cocktail party exclusively for its clients and strategic partners on its second anniversary, as a show of appreciation for their continuous support and confidence.

Although only two years old, Catalytx managed to sign up several high-profile clients in both the manufacturing, financial, pharmaceutical, and consumer products market. Among these include Abbott Laboratories, Yakult, East West Banking Corp., Gardenia Bakeries.

According to Richard G. Yang, Catalytx president, the cocktail party they hosted for clients and partners is their own way of thanking them for the support and vote of confidence they placed on the firm, despite the not-so-favorable state of the economy last year.

"We were very fortunate to have clients who continue to trust us as their marketing partner through a very difficult year beset by numerous problems and uncertainties in the economy and the society," declares Yang.

The night was truly a memorable event with the presence of representatives and officials from Catalytx's clients, who all showed up at the Suntan Room of the Edsa Shangri-La with high spirits amid a simple but meaningful and joyous celebration. Mr Yang, together with the entire Catalytx staff, gladly mingled with their clients and partners, exchanged pleasantries and partied the night away, as together they welcomed the new year with a mixture of anticipation and optimism.

The affair was highlighted by an audio-visual presentation that featured some of Catalytx's finest TV ad works they created for their clients, among which were the ones made for Yakult (the OK Ka Ba Tiyan? ad) and Abbott (the Grow ad). This explosive agency produced 26 commercials for their various clients in just 24 months, a reasonable achievement.

Yang expressed optimism for this year, supposed to be a prosperous one being the Year of the Goat, according to the Chinese calendar. He also assured that his company would keep track of the developments in the economy, and assured clients that Catalytx will continue to deliver the highest level of service in account management, strategic planning and creative concepts.

PHOTO shows (from left): Richard Yang, Catalytx president; Ana Mansala, PR manager; Teresa Silva, Catalytx account executive; and Michael Ong, Yakult Philippine Sales planning manager at the 2nd anniversary of Catalytx Advertising Inc.

GLOBE HOLDS GTAAA SCREENING

Globe Telecom recently held the final evaluation process for the college level of its Globe Telecom Academic Achievement Awards (GTAAA). Seventeen college students taking up Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE) and Electrical Engineering (EE) from select universities and colleges nationwide recently took their written examination and panel interview. From the 17 students, one will emerge as the overall awardee and will receive P75,000 in cash. The other college awardees will receive P30,000 each. The GTAAA is a major social responsibility program of Globe Telecom aimed at honoring students excellence. This year's search is anchored on the theme: 'Inspiring a Technology-driven Filipino Youth.' Photo shows the college awardees taking their written exams at the Globe Telecom Plaza.

Pagsanjan Bangkero Festival 2003

PAGSANJAN, the tourist capital of Laguna, is steadfast in its effort to regain its rightful place in the tourism industry as the premier world-class tourist destination in the Philippines through the annual "Pagsanjan Bangkero Festival" slated this year on March 5 to 9.

Now on its fifth year, under the dynamic leadership and keen supervision of the young and energetic Pagsanjan Mayor E.R. Ejercito III, the "Pagsanjan Bangkero Festival 2003", held every first week of March, is fast becoming popular with its vibrant, colorful and impressive line-up of events on water and land. These include the traditional boat race (Regatta), fluvial and land parade and best river and land float competition, now bundled with street dancing, drum and lyre band competition, choral fest, cultural night, trade fairs, sports events, singing and modern dance contest, on the spot painting contest, triathlon olympics, mga "palarong bangkero" and the 2nd Search for "Lakan and Binibining Pagsanjan", the 2nd "Ginoong Pagsanjan Bangkero" and the 1st "Festival of Folk Dances". The festival will also feature the Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Company and the Camera Club of the Philippines. The five-day festival promises to be bigger and better with this year's added attractions.

The "Pagsanjan Bangkero Festival" is inspired by and dedicated to Pagsanjan's beloved Patroness Our Lady of Guadalupe and to all the bangkeros in Pagsanjan. "Bangkero" is the Tagalog word for boatman. In Pagsanjan, the bangkeros expertly paddle and maneuver upstream a "banca" against wild rapids and amidst a pristine panorama of lush, virgin forest and gorge in a two-hour boat ride to the world-famous Pagsanjan Falls. These dexterous and skilled boatmen spend most of their time on the river. They are natural navigators and tour guides as they safely steer the tourist's bancas in an exhilarating, spine-tingling, adrenaline-pumping shooting-the-rapids experience.

Enjoy Pagsanjan's best in the "Pagsanjan Bangkero Festival 2003." Come and see their beautiful town and experience the natural wealth of wonders only Pagsanjan can offer - the wet, oozing, wild and worth it. Shooting the rapids and the world-renowned Pagsanjan Falls.

THE NEW CONFIDENT GIRL

Pops Fernandez is chosen celebrity endorser for 2003 Confident Feminine Sanitary Napkins. Edison Ong, general manager of Global Noble International Corporation, is shown with Ms. Pops Fernandez. Confident Sanitary Napkins come in the beltless and panty liner variations now available in major supermarkets and sari-sari store.

The Acoustic Fusion Concert

MANHATTAN Entertainment and Campus Radio 97.1 DWLSFM in association with the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Scuba World will be staging a concert for the benefit of the Philippines Society for Crippled Children Inc. (PSCC) entitled "Acoustic Fusion." The concert will be held on March 5, 8:30 p.m. at Ratsky (Tomas Morato), Quezon City. Featured in the concert are the country's top acoustic icons - Acoustic Jive, Jimmy Bondoc and Paolo Santos.

The show boasts of the talent of Paolo Santos who happens to be a musician gifted with the power to mesmerize listeners with his ability to make an acoustic guitar sound like a complete musical ensemble. On the other hand, Jimmy Bondoc is a definite crowd-drawer since his composition "Let Me Be The One" is currently dominating the radio airwaves. In addition, Acoustic Jive headed by Romy Jorolan and May Bayot is a truly unique group. The group's light and refreshing sound is brought about by its unusual instrumentation, which include acoustic guitars, flute and indigenous Philippine percussion instruments.

Be enchanted as Paolo, Jimmy and Acoustic Jive merge their musical talents in an evening of pleasing fusion of jazz, pop, r&b, rock, reggae and alternative music.

The show is sponsored by PCSO, Campus radio 97.1 DWLS-FM, Scuba World, The Manila Bulletin, Dimsum & Dumplings, Café Lupe, Dewberry Cookies, Jack & Jill Tostillas, Master Print Shop, Kleyr Dela Cruz Photography and YSA Skin Care Center.

SMC IN PGH GIVE-A-LIFE

San Miguel Corporation (SMC) responded to doctors' cry for help in the Give-A-Life Program of the PGH's pediatrics ward.SMC employees pooled contributions last December for two syringe pumps, boxes of dialysis fluids, and anti-tuberculosis drugs. Dr. Philip Cruz, (2nd from left) PGH chief resident, receives the supplies from Camille Buenaventura, (2nd from right) SMC corporate affairs office-social development acting head. Also in photo are: (from left) Loraine Arante, head nurse PGH pediatric ward; Liwanag Atienza, Milky Apelizan and Marie Eleazar, SMC corporate treasury; and Zach Zaragoza, SMC corporate affairs office-social development.

PLDT-TEXAS INSTRUMENTS DEAL

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. recently inked a deal with Texas Instruments Inc. Under the deal, PLDT will provide TI with international and domestic leased lines as well as digital DID (direct inward dialing) and DOD (direct outward dialing) trunklines for the company's voice, video and data transmission needs. Seated from left: Renato L. Catañeda, PLDT head for regional sales; Alfredo S. Panlilio, PLDT SVP/head for the corporate business group; Alan Boyd, TI director for finance, procurement and logistics; Freddie Malonzo TI manager for procurement and logistics; and Bobot de los Trinos TI director for MIS.

RJ100'S OFFICE TOUR

Experience a new concept in entertainment as RJ100 brings the latest and the greatest Pinoy recording artist to you in your work place. Last Jan. 24, Planet Sports Inc. employees and all the other tenants of the Phinma Building at Rockwell Center Makati were treated to performances by Daisy Reyes, Ybeth Garcia and Gail Blanco. The second RJ100 Office tour will be at the DHL House in Makati City on Feb. 28 featuring Nina, 80M and Trio. To avail of this great opportunity, tune in to RJ100 or simply text RJ (space) OFC your comments and send to 2299.

Batanes Easter getaway

IN SUPPORT of DOT's campaign Visit Philippines 2003, Travel Warehouse Inc, is proud to offer its Batanes Easter Getaway. Travel Warehouse is one of the pioneers in designing affordable and customized package tours, particularly on exotic destinations like Canaima in Venezuela, Margarita Island in the Carribean, Anchorage in Alaska, Tibet in China, and Siem Rep in Cambodia. This time, TWI goes local by giving the public access to the geographically isolated island of Batanes. This Easter package will be on April 17 with two options to return back in Manila on April 19 or 21. Deadline to reserve seats is on Feb. 28. For details, call TWI at 687-2490 to 92, or text 0917-6626881.

Bits Clips

CFS seminars slated

CFS CONTINENTAL Technology lines up the seminars: "Developing Excellent Business Communication Skills" (Feb. 27, 9 a.m. to noon) improves participants' vocabulary power, skill in spelling, choice of words, writing style, speaking and critical listening. "Direct Selling" (Feb. 27, 1-5 p.m.) enhances direct selling skills in relation to products and services. "Customer Service That Works" (Feb. 28, 1 day) equips supervisors and managers with skills on customer service through different modules. "The Challenge of Creative Selling" (March 7, 1 day) is an overview of the changing buyers' market as participants learn tried and tested selling methods. "Fire Safety, Prevention and Control" (March, 1 day) is on response and prevention, and the Basic Fire Code of the Philippines. Call 869-7960, 823-2358 or 823-4825 for details.

Architect on urban renewal

AUSTRALIAN architect Philip Cox will discuss urban renewal during the 70th annual convention of the Philippine Institute of Architects. Anchored on the theme "Architect's Vision: Diversity of Practice and Opportunities", the convention will be held Feb. 27 to March 1 at the Westin Philippine Plaza Hotel in Pasay City. Cox, also a landscape painter, has been awarded the Rala Gold Medal and honorary fellowship of the American Institute of Architects. He has published books on the history of Australia's towns and buildings. Other PIA guest speakers include professor Ruslan Khalid from Malaysia, Mark Neasby, director of the Australian Centre for Value Management, and architect Tony Tan, Minister of Housing in Singapore.

Marketing seminar

THE "SENIOR Executive Marketing Program" by Mansmith and Fielders (723-6671, 722-2318) on Feb. 27 at the Mandarin Oriental, Makati City, is for high-ranking corporate officers whose primary concern is to improve the value of their companies for their stockholders. The seminar addresses how top-level management can use decisive marketing moves to improve the shareholder value of a company through long- and short-term competitive strategies, improving profit margins and investment returns, forging strategic partnerships, and effective implementation. The seminar draws real-life successes and failures clearly chronicled in detailed case studies.

NESTLE ENVIRONMENT FORUM

The Nestle Business Partners' Environment Forum, held every three months, focuses on social responsibility in initiating and sustaining environmental efforts not only in Nestle's business operations but also in the daily activities of all employees. DOST specialists shared tips on energy management, and discussions on alternative fuel, environmental issues and regulations, and Nestle's Greening the Supply Chain (GSC) program were held. Launched in collaboration with the United States Asia Environmental Partnership, GSC seeks to establish a venue where both Nestle and its business partners can interact and learn from each other about environmental performance. In photo, SVP for milks Gilbert Joven delivers the opening remarks.

Christian education builds better citizens

IN TODAY'S world where dissonant voices vie for our children's attention, it is reassuring and encouraging to find an educational institution that is founded and guided by biblical principles. "There are two lasting things we can give our children; one is roots, the other is wings." This is the mission of the Potter and Clay Christian School Inc. (PCCFSI), a non-profit organization established to provide high quality education to children at reasonable cost.

Located in Niugan, Malabon, Rizal, the Potter and Clay Christian School seeks to impart to each student Christian character development, communication and language skills and social awareness to reinforce their love of God, love of country and love of fellowmen. Because each child is a future contributing citizen of the human society, the foundation of proper Christian values at an early age is essential. The reinforcement of these values in the school as well as the home environment are contributing factors to good citizenship.

The school offers pre-elementary and elementary education, post secondary program and computer courses. Founded in 1999 and barely three years in operation, the school now has an enrollment of 80 students. It offers affordable tuition (installment plans available), air-conditioned classrooms, and most importantly, highly trained Christian teachers. Creative music, tutorial services as well as individualized instructions are being offered as well.

The Potter and Clay Christian School was inspired by the exemplary life of Mrs Magdalena Santos Lapus who sought to bring Christian faith and practice to everyone she touched with her generosity and love. Her children and grandchildren honor her memory with the creation of the Potter and the Clay Foundation Inc., a non-profit organization established and dedicated to developing young minds in bible based Christian values so as to nurture their God-given potential and talents to the fullest.

For more information, visit or contact Mr Ismael S. Lapuz, president at the school: Cor. Sanciangco and F. Nocolas Sts. Niugan, Malabon, tel. no. 287-9613.